

WE WERE ON THE GOOD
SHIP WALKER STALKER

BEHIND THE
SCENES SET VISIT
MAKING SEASON 7



THE WALKING DEAD

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

TIME FOR



SEASON EIGHT PREVIEW

EXCLUSIVE

CAST & CREW INTERVIEWS

GREG NICOTERO | ROSS MARQUAND | KATELYN NACON

MATURE CONTENT

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LONDON



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COHAN**

(AMC's THE WALKING DEAD)

**NORMAN
REEDUS**

(AMC's THE WALKING DEAD)

**JEFFREY DEAN
MORGAN**

(AMC's THE WALKING DEAD)

MARCH 10 & 11, 2018

OLYMPIA, LONDON, UK

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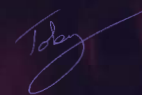
THE GREAT LEVELER

In terms of equal opportunities, the undead are about as unprejudiced as you can get. Age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexuality, size, social status, wealth – these things are all irrelevant to a walker with a hankering for fresh brains. The living, sadly, often feel otherwise, and prejudice and discrimination still abound in modern society. But how do these carry over to the fictional world of our favorite comic book and TV series? Is there room for such things when survival is the most important thing? This issue, we take a look at one section of that, examining the representation of the LGBTQ community in the series, asking whether the zombie apocalypse is really the greatest leveler of them all.

Actor Ross Marquand also joins us to talk about Aaron, one of the main players of Rick's army heading into season eight. We gather his thoughts on last season and what's to come in the weeks ahead – both of which also provide two major components elsewhere in this issue. We have our special preview of season eight ('All Out War' here we come!), as well as a behind-the-scenes pictorial review of season seven and a set visit for the emotional episode 'Say Yes,' which includes exclusive interviews with Greg Nicotero and John Sanders.

Also, we review the third season of *The Walking Dead: A Telltale Games Series*; we climb aboard the cruise of a life time (if you're a *Walking Dead* fan anyway); and we're delighted to showcase the extraordinary talents of a new regular columnist for *TWDM*, the very lovely YouTuber Kate O'Shaughnessy (who featured in last season's AMC's *Talking Dead* finale, don't you know). It almost goes without saying that you will find all our usual in-depth features in our regular sections, including your wonderful letters and art (please do keep sending them in!).

Until next time... Sayonara!



Toby Weidmann, Editor

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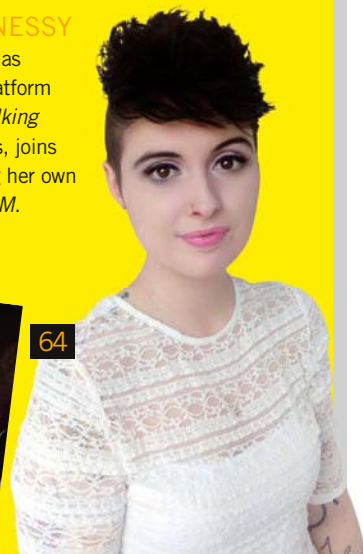


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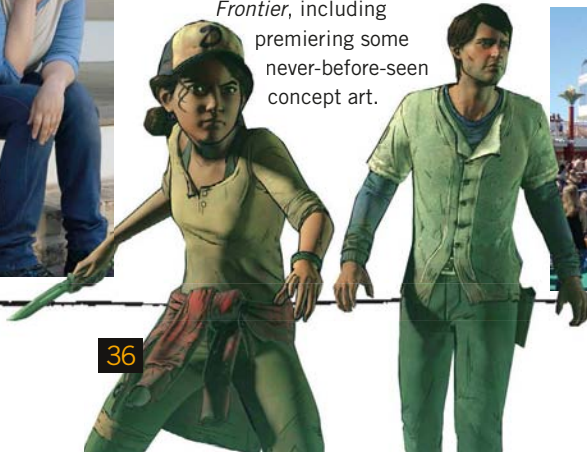
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EDITORIAL

EDITOR Toby Weidmann
SENIOR EDITOR Divinia Fleary
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Tolly Maggs
DESIGN Russell Seal

CONTRIBUTORS

Dan Auty, Stuart Barr, Tara Bennett, Russell Cook, Lexi Cummins, Kate Lloyd, Kate O'Shaughnessy, Chris Schilling

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Michael Cudlitz, James Frazier, Danai Gurira, Robert Kirkman, Andrew Lincoln, Ross Marquand, Katelyn Nacon, Greg Nicotero, John Sanders, and Michael Traynor

US Advertising Manager Jeni Smith
jeni.smith@titanemail.com
0044 1326 375535

CONTACT US

E: walkingdeadmail@titanemail.com
FACEBOOK: /WalkingDeadMagazine
MAIL: (US) *The Walking Dead Magazine*, Titan Magazines, 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL, 60503, USA.
(UK) *The Walking Dead Magazine*, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP, UK

TITAN MAGAZINES

Senior Production Controller Jackie Flook
Production Supervisor Maria Pearson
Production Controller Peter James
Production Assistant Natalie Bolger
Art Director Oz Browne
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Direct Sales & Marketing Manager Ricky Claydon
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Publishing Director Chris Teather
Operations Director Leigh Baulch
Executive Director Vivian Cheung
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"We're not going anywhere"



HEAD SHOTS

A full round-up of everything that's been happening in *The Walking Dead* and beyond

NEWS EDITOR: Kate Lloyd



PIECES OF EIGHT

Season eight of AMC's *The Walking Dead* explodes onto TV screens on October 22 (US) and 23 (UK), and it's going to turn fans upside down, inside out, and every which way but loose, according to several of the show's leading lights.

In an exclusive interview with *TWDM*, co-executive producer and regular director Greg Nicotero revealed how *The Walking Dead*'s eighth year – which kicks off with the Nicotero-directed 100th episode, a monumental milestone for any show – would be very different from anything we have seen so far.

"We constantly want to redefine the show," Nicotero explained. "We have an obligation to the fans not to deliver the same thing over and over again. I can be very confident in saying the theme and tone of this season is

quite different from what we did last season."

Excited? Us too. And it isn't just Nicotero who has promised a bold new course for the series. In a recent interview with *Entertainment Weekly*, *The Walking Dead*'s showrunner, Scott M Gimple, revealed that the ante was being upped considerably on the coming year, suggesting that fan feedback on season seven's pace had not only been heeded but actioned.

"By virtue of the fact that the narrative has turned into one of pretty intense conflict, it's going to affect the structure in ways that make it a bit more kinetic, a bit more breakneck... So yeah, things are going to move," Gimple teased.

In terms of theme, tone, and episode structure, season eight certainly seems to mean business. But what about Rick Grimes, Maggie Greene, Ezekiel,

Negan, and the rest? What can we expect from their storylines this year? Nicotero wasn't giving too much away (understandably, given the interview's proximity to the season eight premiere air date), but one thing was clear, the stage is set for full-scale war.

"I know where our stories are taking us," Nicotero revealed. "It's always helpful when I direct the finale and then the premiere because we do want the continuity of our world to exist even though our storylines are diverging. I think knowing at the end of season seven that our people are ready to fight sets us up for launching the new season."

As has become the norm on *The Walking Dead*, the eighth year begins with several long-serving characters having been killed off. Asked how such losses affect the onscreen dynamic, Nicotero was thoughtful in his

reply. "You definitely notice the shift in energy, but this has been inherent with the show from season one. It's always been a bit of a shapeshifter as the landscape changes with the introduction and deaths of a lot of these characters... To this day, I still say the reason why the show continues to be strong and succeed is because we really got a chance to know who these characters were in season two. If we hadn't had time to dig into those characters, you wouldn't care about them."

He continued: "As for this year, the energy and landscape evolves. Part of my job and Scott Gimple's job and everyone else's, is to keep the focus on making the show as good as it can be. It's a 24-hour-a-day job, that's for sure."

At San Diego Comic-Con in July, *The Walking Dead* panel, which featured most of the main cast, celebrated the show's longevity with a sizzle reel of clips selected from across all seven of the previous seasons. Hitting 100 episodes is quite an achievement for the cast, crew and fans. As Andrew Lincoln said: "This has been the most incredible experience of my life."

Usually, TV series in their eighth year are winding down in preparation for calling it a day. *The Walking Dead*, by comparison, seems to be more entering its adulthood. With a fourth season of sister show AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead* also confirmed, this juggernaut looks set to roll on and on. ♦

Official sites: www.skybound.com, www.thewalkingdead.com, and www.amctv.com/shows/the-walking-dead

**FEEL THE FORCE:
THE SHIVA FORCE!**

SDCC '17 EXCLUSIVE P.8



**NEW THE
WALKING
DEAD MASK
CAN'T FAIL
TO SHOCK
P.9**

APOCALYPSE WOW!

Drum roll please (because this news is pretty huge)...

Robert Kirkman and David Alpert's multi-platform production company, Skybound Entertainment, has teamed up with Skydance Interactive, creator and publisher of original and IP-based virtual reality experiences and video games, to bring fans "a cutting edge, interactive, virtual reality storytelling experience featuring *The Walking Dead*."

Over the next few years, the two companies will co-develop a series of VR games based on *The Walking Dead*'s ever-growing universe. This exciting collaboration will kick-off with *The Walking Dead VR*, which Skybound and Skydance promise will be an unparalleled gaming experience. Featuring a brand new setting and an entirely new cast of characters, this inaugural title will employ

an innovative contextual interaction system – the first of its kind for *The Walking Dead* in VR – that will thrust players straight into the heart of the zombie apocalypse.

In a joint statement, Skydance Media chief executive officer, David Ellison, and president and chief operating officer, Jesse Siskold, declared: "*The Walking Dead* is an iconic phenomenon and it is absolutely thrilling to work with Skybound to bring its incredibly diverse cast of characters, settings,

and storylines together into a complete VR game package. Our goal at Skydance is to honor the visceral world that Kirkman has created while giving *The Walking Dead*'s fans something to really sink their teeth into with robust games that take the franchise to a completely new level."



David Alpert and Skybound Entertainment's managing partner, Jon Goldman, echoed the developer's enthusiasm. "Skydance's ability to build worlds and tell compelling stories matches our goal to bring *The Walking Dead* fans new narratives and ways to engage with the world Robert Kirkman created, while staying true to his original vision," they said. "Skydance is the ideal partner for the team [president] Dan Murray has created for Skybound Interactive."

We are pretty excited about this news, so watch this space for more details.

THE COVER GALLERY

Each issue, *TWDM* features exclusive variant covers. Here's what's on offer for issue 21, including one from series artist, Charlie Adlard.



NEWSSTAND



DIAMOND EXCLUSIVE

TALKING POINTS

It's official – AMC's *The Walking Dead* isn't just one of the most

watched TV shows in the world.

It's one of the most talked about, too. Indeed, it's the most talked about according to Nielsen's Social Contact Ratings for the 2016-17 TV season. Over the course of its seventh

season, the show generated more than 2 million interactions per episode on Twitter and Facebook. That is a lot of tweeting and Facebook posts. It convincingly beat second-placed *Empire* (with 860,000 mentions per episode), and *The Bachelor* taking the third placed spot (with 453,000).

To gather the data the team at Nielsen scoured social media for TV show-related activity three hours before and three hours after shows aired (as well as during).

We always knew *The Walking Dead* had the most engaged fans in the world and now we have the proof.



HEAD SHOTS

A full round-up of everything that's been happening in *The Walking Dead* and beyond

MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU



If you weren't able to make this year's San Diego Comic-Con and you are prone to the occasional fit of jealous rage, then we suggest you *don't* read on.

Why? Because, as it has become custom, our favorite multi-platform entertainment company, Skybound, unleashed some tantalizing new *The Walking Dead* goodies at this year's convention — some of which were exclusive to the 2017 con.

With only 1,000 copies in existence, the most sought-after offering was undoubtedly the exclusive *The Walking Dead* — Shiva Force Action Figure Set. Inspired by Robert Kirkman's comic book, this, ahem,

regular color version and also a bloody variant) were *only* available at Skybound's SDCC booth. But don't despair, because non-attendees can still get their hands on Shiva Force's secret fifth member, Jesus. All you have to do is sign-up for a MegaBox subscription from Skybound. Jesus is exclusive to the summer edition of The MegaBox, which is currently shipping now. As well as this saintly five-inch McFarlane figure, the box also includes an exclusive comic, a T-shirt, and an enamel pin.

roar-some 1980s-themed collection included five-inch figures of Rick, Michonne, Ezekiel and — in her action figure debut — Shiva.

As mentioned above, these amazing gift sets (which were priced at \$100 and came in a



Back to SDCC... Also available was series one of the Skybound Minis range. A brand-new line-up of three-inch mystery figures, this included Rick Grimes, Negan, and Andrea. The perfect desktop companions, they were selling for \$10 a pop.

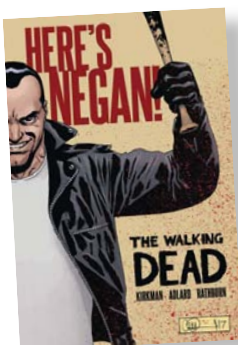
Many more new wares (including T-shirts and pins) were unveiled at SDCC and can be found on Skybound's online store.



PAPER ROUNDS

Are you a Negan fan? Then have we a treat for you. The ever-brilliant Image Comics is releasing the character's backstory in a gorgeous hardcover edition this October (October 4 in comic book retailers, October 10 in other stores).

Retailing at \$19.99 and titled *Here's Negan!* (in what's surely an ode to another charming psychopath from pop culture), the tome collects in its entirety the 16 individual chapters that were serialized between April 27, 2016 onwards. Totalling 72 pages, all in gorgeous black and white, with the exception of Charlie Adlard and Dave Stewart's superb cover, the book reveals who Negan was before the apocalypse and how he first met Lucille. The answer may surprise you.



In other comic news, issue 171 of *The Walking Dead* is out in early September, introducing us to the fearsome 'Princess.' And then we have the latest trade paperback collection, *Volume 28: A Certain Doom*. Priced at \$16.99, it collects together issues 163-168.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES

In celebration of LGBTQ Pride Month in July, Image Comics released 11 variant covers of some of its most popular publications, including *The Walking Dead*, *Redneck*, and *Black Magick*.

With 100 percent of the proceeds going to the advocacy group Human Rights Campaign, these variants paid tribute to the LGBTQ community, with Image's publisher Eric Stephenson declaring: "It's never been a secret that Image Comics is supportive of creative freedom, but it's important that we also make it clear that we stand for inclusivity, diversity, and equality, now more than ever. We hope these variants will serve as a positive display of that ongoing commitment."

Created by Sina Grace (a former editor of *The Walking Dead*) and Tamra Bonvillian, the variant cover for *The Walking Dead* issue 168 showed Jesus — one of several gay characters in the comic — impaling a walker with a rainbow flag. Nice!

In other LGBTQ news, AMC's *The Walking Dead* actor Daniel Newman (who also plays Daniel on the show) announced he is gay via his Twitter and Instagram accounts recently. He stated: "I'm #OUTandPROUD #LGBT Love you guys. Be proud to be yourself. We need everyone just the way you are!"

We couldn't agree more, Daniel.

To find out more about the Human Rights Campaign, visit: hrc.org



TREATS FOR TRICKS



For more info, visit:
trickortreatstudios.com

Be afraid, be very afraid! Why? Because the talented team at Trick Or Treat has released a new collection of eerily lifelike AMC's *The Walking Dead* goodies – just in time for the witching season.

Shipping now, this year's terrifying 'treats' include the fiendish Walker Ear Necklace. Sculpted by art director Justin Mabry, and retailing at \$14.99, this skin-crawling offering is modeled after Daryl Dixon's infamous neckwear and comprises four realistic latex ears connected by brown twine. If this doesn't creep out visiting trick or treaters then nothing will. It almost should come with a parental warning, it's that effective.

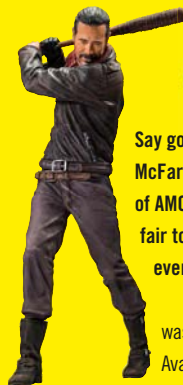
Also available from the company is the Shock Walker



Mask. Priced at \$59.99, this scary-as-heck disguise is based on one of season six's most notorious undead marauders. Once again created by Mabry (who really must have nerves of steel), the mask boasts a shock of white hair, one protruding eyeball, one missing eyeball, and a set of truly horrendous teeth.

Last but certainly not least, the company has produced a foam replica of Negan's much-used baseball bat, Lucille. Measuring 36 inches and weighing almost two pounds, it looks and swings like the real thing and even has a trademark black circle. You can snap this up for \$24.99.

HOLDING OUT FOR 3 HEROES



Say goodbye to your savings, folks, because McFarlane Toys has just released another haul of AMC's *The Walking Dead* goodies and it's fair to say that you're going to want each and every one of them. We know we do.

Our favorite item this issue (although it was a really tough call) is the Heroes 3-Pack.

Available now as a Walmart Exclusive, this fantastic collection comprises three fully posable five-inch figures of Michonne, Rick, and Daryl, dressed in their season seven attire (pictured below). Price is \$29.99.

Also out now is the Negan And Glenn Deluxe Box, which recreates the characters' now-iconic scene from the opening episode of season seven (before – rather than after – Glenn met his maker, thank goodness). Retailing at \$34.99, the set also includes two scaled assault rifles, pistol, watch, knife, and Lucille (naturally).

Over the next couple of months you'll also be able to get your hands on a 10-inch Negan Deluxe figure (\$34.99), which depicts the leader of the Saviors in full, intimidating swing. We don't even want to think about who might be on the receiving end. Ouch!

Visit: mcfarlane.com



THE TWEETING DEAD

We trawl Twitter for fun *Walking Dead* tweets so you don't have to...

People... you should know KING ARTHUR is way awesome! Trailers don't reveal how weirdly awesome it is. There's giant bats! #giantbats

@RobertKirkman

tbh the only perk of being 18 is being able to go out past midnight to buy some cookie dough @ChandlerRiggs Jubilant, meaningful, fantastic. Yesss to @WonderWomanFilm and all you represent! @GalGadot @PattyJenkins #ChrisPine #LovesTheCure

@LaurenCohan

There's a special place in hell for delivery people who knock when nothing needs to be signed. I. Have.

Dogs. @cserratos

Still, one of my proudest moments was that time I played \$20 of songs in that valley bowling alley juke & they asked me to DJ Saturday nights.

@ScottMGimple

Listening to James Horner's "Clear and Present Danger" for first time in almost 20 years. Forgotten how definitive this score was to me!

@bearmccreary

The CDC really does have a plan for The Walking Dead in real life!

#BePrepared @GunnerGale

WHO TO FOLLOW...

@RobertKirkman; @SteveYeun; Norman Reedus @wwwbigbaldhead; @mcbriamelissa; @ChandlerRiggs; @LaurenCohan; Michael Cudlitz @Cudlitz; Christian Serratos @cserratos; Alanna Masterson @lightbrigade; @kimdickens; Gale Anne Hurd @GunnerGale; @ScottMGimple; @bearmccreary; Chris Hardwick @nerdist; @TheWalkingDead; @Skybound; WalkingDead_AMC; @ImageComics; @AMCTalkingDead; @WalkingDeadMag

DON'T FORGET!

You can follow *TWDM* on Facebook (search 'Walking Dead Magazine') and Twitter (@WalkingDeadMag)



THE MINI UNDEAD

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, you are going to want these toys, in this we trust. Forgive our little poem, but we think you're really going to love Funko's new Mystery Minis: AMC's *The Walking Dead* – In Memoriam range.

Out now from the company, this hugely collectible new series pays tribute to *The Walking Dead*'s fallen. And let's face it, from Abraham, Sophia, and Dale to Merle, Glenn (sob!), and Lori, there are quite a few that fit into that category. Each figure stands at roughly 2.5 inches tall and has a greyish hue, befitting its character's deceased status. Some like Glenn, have splashes of red, too (hmmm, we wonder what that could possibly represent?).

As with all of Funko's Mystery Minis, the figures come blind bagged, which means you don't know who you're getting until you open the packaging.



NEWS IN BRIEF

MORE MANTIC

Mantic Games and Skybound Entertainment have unveiled an updated version of the hugely popular *The Walking Dead: All Out War* game, which is tentatively penciled in for a September release. Wave Two focuses on the story at the Greene farm, and features an expansion pack that includes a replica of the Greene Family Farm, complete with barn (with removable roof, interior elements and opening doors), tractor, six fences, and four resin hay bales.

THE RETURN OF GLENN



If, like us, you're still desperately missing Glenn, then here's some news to cheer you up. *Okja*, the critically acclaimed South Korean/US action adventure movie, which stars Steven Yeun as a Korean-American animal rights activist, is now available on Netflix. Give it a go – it's quirky but terrific. In other Glenn news – and we're trying not to get too excited by this – Yeun has said that he's "totally down" for returning to AMC's *The Walking Dead*. Talking to *The Daily Telegraph*, the actor declared: "I wouldn't want anybody to force anything but if it makes sense, then I am totally down."

V FOR VICTORIA

AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead* writer Jami O'Brien is developing a potential new drama series for AMC – and it sounds fantastic. Based on the horror novel by Joe Hill (son of Stephen King), *NOS4A2* centers on Victoria 'Vic' Queen, a woman with an incredible gift for finding things, be it objects or people.

HEAD SHOTS

A full round-up of everything that's been happening in *The Walking Dead* and beyond

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN BERNECKER

The *Walking Dead* Magazine is extremely sad to report the death of John Bernecker, a stunt performer who tragically died after an on-set accident while filming the eighth season of AMC's *The Walking Dead* in July of this year.

In an official statement, showrunner Scott M Gimple said: "Our production is heartbroken by the tragic loss of John Bernecker. John's work on *The Walking Dead* and dozens of other movies and shows will continue to entertain and excite audiences for generations. We are grateful for his contributions, and all of us send our condolences, love, and prayers to John's family and friends."

The show's famously close-knit cast and crew were quick to pay their respects, with Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Lauren Cohan, and Norman Reedus among those to share their sadness at Bernecker's death. "Deep sorrow today, and for every tomorrow. Love, respect, and condolences to [John's] family, and friends. He will be forever missed," wrote Morgan on Twitter.

Bernecker's large body of work includes the TV shows *24: Legacy* and *Scream Queens*, as well as the movies *Logan*, *The Fate Of The Furious*, and the upcoming *Black Panther*.

John Bernecker, stunt performer, born March 2, 1984, died July 13, 2017

TROPHY OR NOT TROPHY

It's been a golden couple of months for *The Walking Dead* franchise. Cissy

Jones, the Idaho-born actress who voices Katjaa, Jolene, Linda, Brie, Dee, Norma and many more in Telltale's *The Walking Dead* games series, won a prestigious BAFTA award earlier this year for her vocal performance as Delilah in the acclaimed video game, *Firewatch*. Jones attended the BAFTA Games Awards, held in London, UK back in March and collected the trophy in person.

AMC's *The Walking Dead* also came up trumps at the 2017 Saturn Awards. Hosted by actor Sean Gunn (younger brother of



Guardians Of The Galaxy director James Gunn), the show picked up Best Horror Television Series (seeing off strong competition from its sister show AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead*), Best Actor On Television for Andrew Lincoln and Best Guest Performance In A Television Series for Jeffrey Dean Morgan.

Huge congratulations from everyone here at *TWDM* to all!

TELLTALE GOES FOURTH

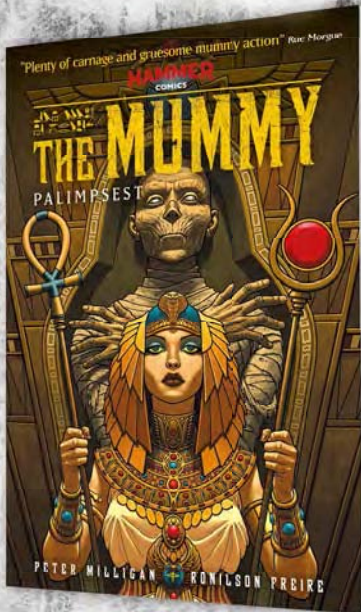


Telltale Games surprised everyone at SDCC 2017 with news that the fourth season of its very popular and multi award-winning *The Walking Dead* series would be its last. There is some good news though – this final season will see Clementine return as the main playable character in the game.

When we last saw Clem at the end of season three, she was heading off in search of the infant AJ. Voice artist Melissa Hutchison said: "It's going to be an amazing experience... So much love has been behind this whole experience. Good luck, I'll be right there with you."

SINK YOUR TEETH INTO THESE!

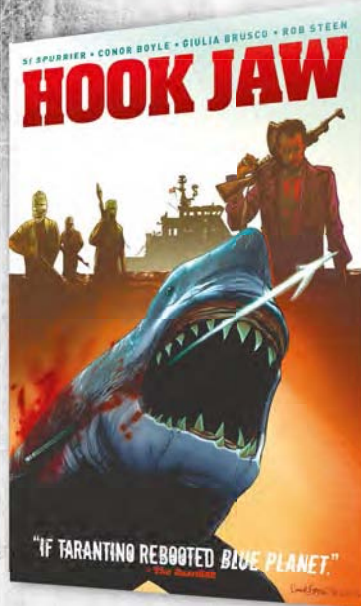
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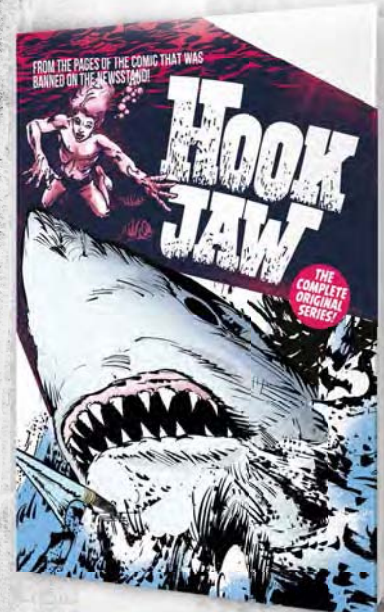
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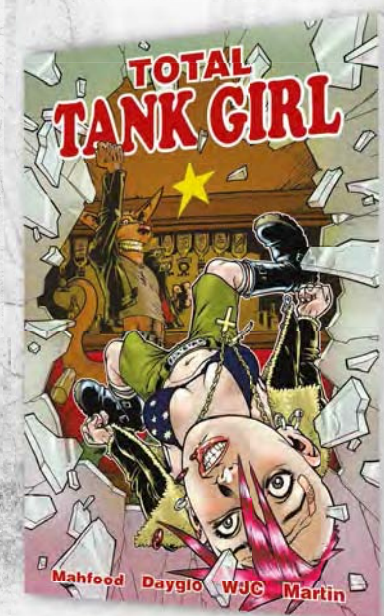
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SDCC 2017 ROUND-UP

Robert Kirkman on where the story will go in season eight of the AMC TV show:

"It's a little early [to confirm], but we all know it's the 'All Out War' story. In season eight, we're trying to do a more fast-paced season, a more action-packed season, really focusing on momentum. We feel [that] over the first seven seasons we kind of set all of the characters into place, and now it's time to break them to a certain extent."

Kirkman on 'Old Man Rick,' revealed in the sting at the end of the season eight trailer:

"[Showrunner] Scott Gimple will give me very harsh words if I were to comment on that in any way, but you're supposed to be talking about that, and that is an intriguing tidbit that we did throw out there on purpose. We're hoping that people continue to question how that fits into the storyline and what it is. Comic book fans know where a scene that kind of looked like that would fall, but it also doesn't seem like we would be getting to that just yet. You'll just have to see."

Kirkman on whether research experts work on the TV series:

"You may notice we're not very thorough when it comes to 'entomology.' Not a lot of that going on, at all. We do research

It was a subdued San Diego Comic-Con this summer for *The Walking Dead* after the tragic death of stuntman John Bernecker while filming season eight (see 'News'). The TV team recognized this deep loss to their family at their Hall H panel, while Robert Kirkman had an earlier solo Q&A session with fans. However, there was still plenty to glean from both panels about the upcoming season eight and comic issue releases going into the fall. Kirkman also offered further thoughts at a Television Critics Association panel the following week.

TRANSCRIPTION: Tara Bennett



as much as we can, but there's a lot of people on the show, writing staff wise, and there are writer's assistants checking things for facts, but we all do our own research... Guns seem

to be what we get nitpicked the most about. If I had a full-time person to make things bulletproof, and really check out your stories, everything would be better.”

Kirkman on whether his mention of Daryl being ‘asexual’ on AMC’s *Talking Dead* referred to his sexual identity in an LGBTQ sense:

“Being completely honest, I was ignorant to the existence of asexual people at the time and so I didn’t know. I just meant asexual as in he’s not really a sexual person. That being said, I wouldn’t entirely rule it out. It could be Daryl is an asexual person because we don’t really see that side of him. With LGBTQIA, it’s sometimes a hot button thing and you kind of worry about what you can say. I’m a stupid straight white guy, so I don’t know a lot of things. It’s just not my world. I try to be as knowledgeable as I can and when I do find blind spots I try to make sure I dive in and educate myself. I have done that since, but that was an ignorance on my part.”

Kirkman on if the TV show will go back to exploring a possible cure:

“No. It’s been done in a lot of other stories. And it’s mythology breaking. As far as trying to solve the thing, I’ve always felt it’s unrelatable to figure it out. This show is about people and their struggle to survive so that’s the focus.”

Kirkman on the impact of John Bernecker’s death on the season and the crew:

“That was a tragic accident. It wasn’t story-related, it was just a freak accident that happened on set... but it hasn’t affected the storyline in any way. It’s a tragedy. It’s something that everyone is dealing with in their own way, and it’s something that will continue to stick with us for years to come.”

Kirkman on whether there’s a new big event coming in the comic:

“You do get to a certain point in the series where there are tent poles. It’s not necessarily a cycle but if you don’t have those peaks and valleys, they don’t have the effect you want. I think it’s just a storytelling technique. We’re not in a down period with Andrea dying and everything.”

Kirkman on how *The Walking Dead* comic book could end:

“About two or three years ago, I had a pretty good idea for a definitive ending. I have known that since then, and been working towards that, so I know exactly where I’m going and what’s gonna happen when I get there. I haven’t written it down or anything...”



ABOVE: Andrew Lincoln’s first memory of shooting the premiere was making Jon Bernthal (Shane) sweat due to his wayward driving. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** There have been lots of theories about Old Man Rick in the season eight trailer. Could it be referencing the post-time jump’s ‘A New Beginning?’

[That] seems too practical and responsible, but I remember it. So, I’m working towards that, but it’s a very long way off.”

Kirkman on ending *Invincible*:

“The last issue comes out in January [2018]. It’s mixed emotions because I’m really excited about all the twists and reveals, and how we’re wrapping it up. Lately, we’re talking about the *Invincible* movie, which is exciting. I’m not done writing [the comic]. I still have a couple of issues to go, but every time I do more work on it, I don’t know how it’s going to be when it’s done.”

Following the 100-episode video retrospective in Hall H, actor Andrew Lincoln (Rick Grimes) offered his memories of his first day shooting the show:

“It was me and (Jon) Bernthal on that road doing a car block. Jon’s knee was busted, so I drove him around Atlanta on the way to work, and I kept driving on the left-hand side of the road. Then we had to get into a car and drive at 80mph and stop. He has never sweat so much. It was Jon and me, terrified [and] trying to make sense of where we were. It’s very moving to see those 100 episodes. It’s been the most incredible experience of my life.”

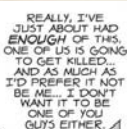
Danai Gurira (Michonne) recalls her thoughts of joining the show in season three:

“I was thinking about stepping into this amazing piece of work in season three, and it was about learning from those who had created and built this family. Andrew Lincoln, who has helmed this ship for 100 episodes. Lennie James in that first episode, as well, where I was totally gripped by how they created that stunning dynamic of this world. I followed the lead of watching two seasons worth of how these people had built this very powerful human story.” •

All quotations were taken from the 2017 SDCC and TCA panels.

WORDS: Russell Cook


Five Things You Need To Know About Paul 'Jesus' Monroe




SO, GOD
DAMN IT-
BEFORE
THIS GETS
UGLY

TAKE ME
TO YOUR
LEADER.

5. HE'S LIKE A NINJA, PART I

When he first appeared on the scene, Jesus (Paul Monroe, officially) gave our heroes much cause for concern and mistrust. Let's face it, he started life in the comic by spying on the group as they went about their life in Alexandria, moving among them like an invisible ninja and finding out more about them, their resources, and their armory than they probably knew themselves. Then, while Michonne and Abraham, two of the group's toughest characters, were out clearing walkers, he pounced and took the latter hostage. This wasn't the only time he demonstrated cat-like skills, but it did frame our perspective of him from the very start. Put it this way: if a mission requires a degree of, let's say, secrecy, he's your man. 



Jesus toe-to-toe with anyone – alive or dead – and you would be wise to put your money on him taking them down. From knocking Negan sideways with a kick to the jaw to the previously mentioned takedown of Abraham and Michonne, he's great in close quarters. Hand-to-hand combat is his real skillset, and it's one that has become extremely handy when, on several occasions, he's helped Rick escape a sticky situation. He also has rapid reactions. When Kal chucked a spear at his head following a disagreement, he responded by catching it and snapping it. Dang! Point made. 

U When talking about Jesus and his sexuality,

BUT DON'T THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING...

THE EVER-WELL PAID ACCOUNTS YOU'VE BEEN GETTING OVER...





2 HE LIKES TO READ

If day-to-day survival is your only goal, finding the time to read would be a luxury – and then some. Yet, at several points during his tenure in the series, Jesus's passion for literature is highlighted. In issue 122, he is seen with his head in a book, lying on his bed. He goes on to read to Alex, who snuggles up closely to him as he does so. Even so, living is more important than reading. When Gregory announced, in true cowardly fashion, that the Hilltop would be taking the side of the Savivors in the war, Rick offered Jesus the opportunity to return to the Hilltop to be with those he cares about. To which he responded: "All I have at the Hilltop are a bunch of books." ♦♦♦♦♦



1 HE'S NO SLOUCH IN THE BRAINS DEPARTMENT

He may not be the beefiest of warriors, but there's no doubt Jesus knows how to fight. Part of the reason for that is he's also a clever fighter. His intelligence goes beyond combativeness, too. Perhaps it's a result of being well-read, or maybe there's something about his past we don't know yet, but whatever it is, Jesus is clearly smart. His rational and logical mind, along with his belief in the values of fairness and justice, make him somebody other characters depend on for advice. Rick relied on him for tactical advice against Negan and, as a result, he became a key ally for the series' protagonists during the war. More recently, his time at the Hilltop with Maggie has turned him into a trusted friend, offering sage advice when she needs it most, even before he saved her from Gregory's assassination attempt. ♦♦♦



TOP 5



MISSING PIECES

Five Great Moments From The Comic That Haven't Featured In The Television Series (Yet)

first encounters with a herd, albeit a small one, and the results are devastating. It sets off a chain of events that leads to Donna losing her life, Allen losing the will to live and one of their twin sons losing his mind and killing his brother. The Wiltshire Estates will never feature in the show as it did in the comic for two reasons: first, it was covered in snow – we can only recall it raining a handful of times in the TV series (it always seems to be swelteringly hot), so snow scenes seem unlikely; and second, too much time has passed. This happened in the early days of the comic when our heroes didn't know how to deal with walkers, choosing to run rather than fight. In the TV show, they are now at a point where the threat of the walkers has been much reduced, with other people being the biggest hazard.

ESTATES OF PLAY

5. In issue eight, Rick and his group discover a walled-in community, much like Alexandria, called Wiltshire Estates. It seems like the perfect safe haven from the hell outside. But, after stopping the night in a cleared house, they learn that this is far from the truth – the estate's overrun by walkers. It's one of their



4 RELATIONSHIPS ARE HARD

4. When people are forced together by circumstance, frictions can arise. In the TV show, this was illustrated by Abraham's unceremonious dumping of a car for Sasha, a development

that mirrors events in the comic book without actually following them exactly (in the comic, Abe drops Rosita for Holly). But one relationship breakdown that the show avoided entirely was between Carol, Tyreese and Michonne. In the comic, Michonne, shall we say, 'seduced' Tyreese in the prison gym, a turn of events that led to Carol and Tyreese splitting up as a couple; Carol mentally breaking down; Carol suggesting a threesome with Rick and Lori; and, when that was rebuffed, Carol suiciding. In the show, they went a different way with all three characters, but this comic book moment was a great way of demonstrating how, even under the most stressful circumstances, people are still just people and prone to the same moral dilemmas and temptations as they are in normal life.



3 IT'S FEEDING TIME

Following on from this, we

3. Following on from this, we come to Carol's suicide. As tragic as her death was in the comic book series, it's a moment that would have played out quite dramatically on television. The two versions of Carol are quite different though, despite starting out as similar characters. On the page, Carol was a figure to be pitied; on screen, she's become a force to be reckoned with. That said, TV Carol has gone through her own period of feeling lost and hopeless. ▶



◀ so it's certainly something that could still make it onto the small screen, although it's unlikely it would play out in the same way. We have a feeling fans of the show would start rioting if Carol decided to kill herself via zombie during season eight. But on the other hand, it would be very shocking. Just sayin'... ◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇



2 HANDS OFF!

Picture this: onscreen Rick missing a hand. Think about it. As horrendous as watching Rick's hand being lopped off by The Governor would have been, the impact on the TV story would have been profound. Rick is a strong leader, and although he is respected, he is continuously forced to reassert his authority. Seeing him keep up the act while fending off the undead *sans* hand would have made for some nerve-jangling viewing. He'd have looked bad-ass, though, that's for sure. Rick without

hand (comic) and Rick with hand (TV show) is probably the biggest difference between the two characters. They have teased this moment in the TV show a few times – most memorably in the season seven premiere (when they pulled the ol' switcheroo on us comic book fans), but we think it's unlikely to happen, especially given the special effects that would be needed each episode to remove Andrew Lincoln's hand in each scene. But they took Carl's eye out, as they did in the comic, so never say never... ◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇



1 EYE FOR AN EYE

This moment finds itself among *TWDM*'s top five lists quite often. And there's a reason for that – it's one of, if not *the* most brutal moments in the entire *The Walking Dead*. Michonne, after suffering unspeakable abuse at the hands of The Governor, exacted her own brand of justice. First, she nailed his manhood to a block of wood. That's enough, surely? Nope! Then, she proceeded to shove things in places that those things shouldn't be shoved... you get the picture. The *pièce de résistance*? Finishing up by gouging the swine's eye out with a dirty spoon. Ouch! Naturally, it would have been difficult to get something so graphic by the censors (not just at home but also abroad), and the TV show did a great job of coming up with an alternative. And, in fairness, if they had included it, it would have diminished the brutal impact (if you'll pardon the pun) of Negan's 'Eeny, meeny, miny, moe' scene just a few seasons later. ◇◇



FAITH

SPECIAL SEASON

FEATURE S8 PREVIEW

WAR!

EIGHT PREDICTIONS

SEASON EIGHT OF AMC'S *THE WALKING DEAD* LOOKS ALL SET TO LET SLIP THE DOGS OF WAR (TO COIN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *JULIUS CAESAR*). AFTER SEASON SEVEN'S ACTION-PACKED FINALE, THE BATTLELINES HAVE NOW BEEN DRAWN, ALLIANCES HAVE BEEN FORGED (AND BROKEN), AND, AS NEGAN ACKNOWLEDGED, "WE ARE GOING TO WAR!" *TWDM* TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER WHAT MAY HAPPEN IN THE COMING SEASON, TAKING ITS LEAD FROM THE CHARACTERS AND EVENTS DEPICTED IN THE COMIC BOOK'S EPIC 'ALL OUT WAR' STORYLINE. **WORDS:** DAN AUTY



One of the biggest challenges for the writers and producers of AMC's *The Walking Dead* is judging the pace at which they deliver the comic book's most anticipated

characters and events. The book is so far ahead of the show that fans of both can make reasonable guesses as to what they think will make it onto TV in some form. It might have taken nearly six seasons to introduce Negan, but there was little doubt that we'd get there. The same goes for characters such as King Ezekiel and Paul Monroe, plus locations such as Alexandria, Hilltop and the Sanctuary. There is no guarantee that everything that the fans love in the comic will make it on screen – or if it does, in exactly the same form – but the book does maintain a solid roadmap for the direction of the show.

As in the comic, Negan was quickly established as a very bad man, dispatching long-time hero Glenn with his baseball bat, throwing Abraham into the mix for good measure. Jeffrey Dean Morgan's performance of the Savior's charismatic, bullying, ruthless leader was so good that many viewers were keen to see him get his comeuppance almost immediately. But showrunner Scott M Gimple and his writers have made us wait, slowly developing Negan as a fully-formed character and steadily charting the growth of resistance

**SPOILER
WARNING**

**THE COMIC
REMAINS A SOLID
ROADMAP FOR THE
DIRECTION OF
THE SHOW.**

that formed among the various connected outposts under the Savivors' rule. Those who thought that the comic's era-ending 'All Out War' saga would kick off in the second half of season seven were left disappointed. Gimple and his team had no intention of rushing to that explosive conflict, and only in the last episode did we see the start of hostilities between the Savivors and the uneasy alliance that has been formed among the other communities.

We enter season eight at a point that more-or-less coincides with issue 115 of the comic book. The

final episode of season seven ('The First Day Of The Rest Of Your Life'), like issue 114, ends with a botched attempt to defeat the Savivors within the gates of Alexandria. Rick is saved at the last minute by a sudden appearance from Ezekiel's tiger, Shiva, and Negan and his men are forced to retreat. The war has started.



True To Form

So, what do the subsequent issues tell us about what might happen in season eight? Not surprisingly we know very few specific plot details, but Gimple has spoken about the fact that the next season will see a change in pace to the more contemplative season seven.

"The narrative has turned into one of pretty intense conflict," he told *Entertainment Weekly*. "It's going to affect the structure in ways that make it a bit more kinetic, a bit more breakneck – shifting away from entire stories in one episode, and sort of fractured over several episodes, with little pieces of each story coming together."

If the new season is essentially adapting 'All Out War' – at least initially – it's easiest to guess where the characters that appear in both mediums are heading. Rick Grimes

(Andrew Lincoln) is in much the same place – he is learning to be a leader again, with a much bigger group looking to him for leadership. In the comic, he confesses to Andrea that he has massive doubts about his ability to command such a disparate group, and it's easy to imagine that he will express similar doubts to Michonne (Danai Gurira) in the show.

For the most part, the likes of Carl, Michonne, and Maggie are also following their path from the comic. Carl (Chandler Riggs) is now a trained, efficient part of the team, but one

whose judgment can still be clouded by teenage emotion. The twisted father/son relationship between him and Negan from the comic was faithfully adapted in season seven, and we can expect it to play a part in the upcoming season. The big difference in the show is that Carl's sister, Judith, is still alive, adding a potential stress point that doesn't exist in the books for both Carl and Rick, as they decide whether to fight or keep her safe.

As in the comic, Maggie (Lauren

Cohan) is pregnant with Glenn's child. While this precludes her from much action, the show seems to be moving in the same direction as the book in terms of her relationship with Gregory (Xander Berkeley). Whether or not Gregory will survive season eight remains to be seen – if anything, he is portrayed as even more cowardly and



untrustworthy on TV. We kind of hope he does, just because we enjoy watching Berkeley so much. However, it would not be a huge surprise if Maggie assumes control of the Hilltop this season. She

commands as much respect as Rick or Ezekiel, and the incredible strength she has shown after losing all her siblings, her father and now Glenn proves that she's a born leader.



Change's Afoot

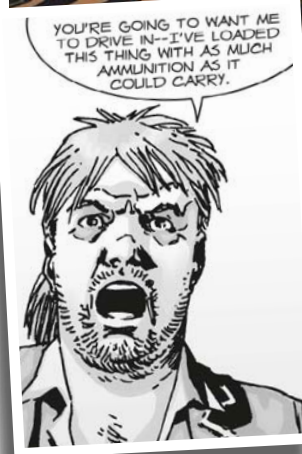
Then there are those characters who exist in both formats, but whose paths have gone in different directions. As mentioned, Gregory is a bit more treacherous than in the comic, but serves much the same purpose in the story. Eugene (Josh McDermitt), on the other hand, has become a far more ambiguous character. While in the comic he remains on Rick's side throughout, in the show he has more-or-less joined the Savivors. Although he admitted to Sasha that it is fear and cowardice that has led him to fall under Negan's command — where his intelligence is both exploited and respected — it's quite clear that he enjoys the same privileged position within the Sanctuary as he does in the comic's Alexandria.

How this will play out in season eight isn't clear, but it's worth noting Eugene's importance to the ultimate victory over Negan in the comic: Rick uses Eugene's knowledge of the Sanctuary and how to manufacture

IF THE NEW SEASON IS ADAPTING 'ALL OUT WAR,' IT'S EASIEST TO GUESS WHERE THE CHARACTERS THAT APPEAR IN BOTH MEDIUMS ARE HEADING.

ammunition to overcome the Savivors. Now the battle lines have been drawn, will Eugene continue to sit on the sidelines while his old friends fight to destroy his new leader?

By this point in the show, there are many characters who are not part of the comic, but it's still worth considering if there are any clues as to what part they might play in the net season. Daryl (Norman Reedus) is the most established non-comic book character, and he has never really had an equivalent on the page. However, with him sidelined as Negan's prisoner, blaming himself for Glenn's death, for much of last season, it's easy to imagine that he will play an important part in the fight back against the



Saviors. Rick is back in charge and, just like in the comic, he shows a renewed desire to overthrow Negan. It's hard to imagine that he wouldn't want Daryl by his side, the pair of them having formed such an effective partnership over the years.

Similarly, Carol (Melissa McBride) is long dead in the comic, and is essentially a different character in the show. She also spent much of the last season withdrawing from those around her,

but by the end of season seven she was seemingly happy to rejoin the group. The events of the comic post-issue 115 are intense and focused, and it's doubtful that the coming season will allow much time for introspection. There's no chance Carol is going to sit out the biggest conflict of the show to date.

Morgan (Lennie James), on the other hand, is an unknown quantity. In the comic, he is also dead by this point. In the show, he seems to be teetering on the edge of sanity once more. He manages to keep it together long enough to fight off the Savivors in the last episode, but this might not be for long. His long-held refusal to kill was broken in that climactic battle, and from the sheer level of killing that the comic delivers over the following dozen issues, we can expect his moral compass to be severely tested. Of all the established characters left alive in the show, we feel Morgan may be in the firing line in more ways than one this season.

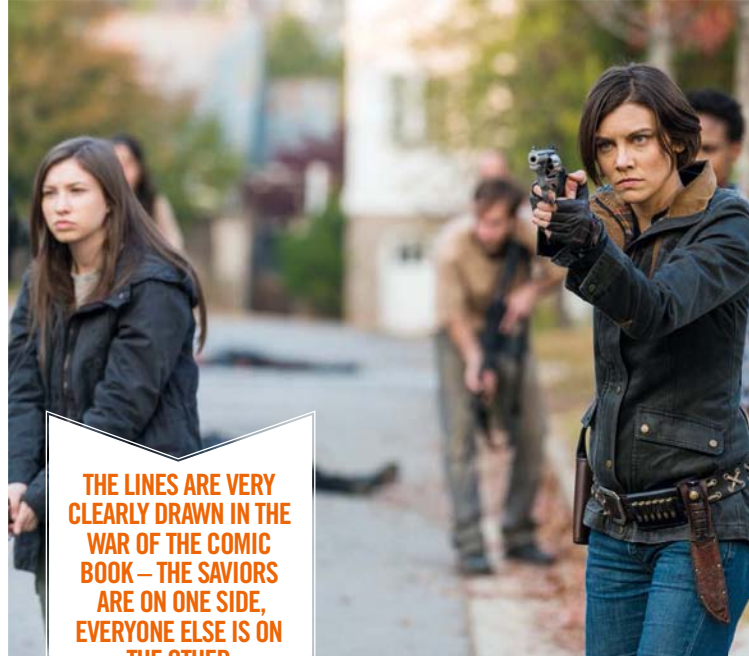




Trash Talk

The biggest addition to the show in the last season was Jadis (Pollyanna McIntosh) and her gang of trash-dwelling Scavengers. Strange, unpredictable and ruthless, they are set to play a major part in the upcoming conflict, which could potentially cause the show to diverge from the comic considerably.

With the exception of Gregory and Dwight (Austin Amelio), the lines are very clearly drawn in the war of the comic book — the Saviors are on one side, everyone else is on the other. In the show, however, the Scavengers sit squarely in the middle. Initially introduced as Rick's uneasy ally, Jadis struck a deal in which she would join his fight against Negan in return for a large cache of weapons. Rick holds up his end of the deal, but in the last episode of season seven, he is double-crossed by Jadis, who has subsequently struck a better bargain with Negan. While we don't know too much about her, it is clear Jadis commands as much control over her people as Rick or Negan. It's hard to imagine her wanting to work with the Saviors without a massive advantage for her group — something Negan might not be willing to give. Equally, the Scavengers can't simply go back to the way they lived before — they are very much part of this conflict.



THE LINES ARE VERY CLEARLY DRAWN IN THE WAR OF THE COMIC BOOK — THE SAVIORS ARE ON ONE SIDE, EVERYONE ELSE IS ON THE OTHER.



Life Or Death

This being war, we expect plenty of deaths on the way this season. The show has rarely followed the comic in this regard; even when storylines are mirrored, the demise of certain characters has often been switched — think Hershel being killed by the Governor instead of Tyreese or Bob taking Dale's place as dinner for the cannibalistic Hunters.

So, if the next season is to follow this pattern — take some iconic deaths but keep things unpredictable by applying them to other characters — which ones might we see? It's hard to say, but, as mentioned, Morgan seems potentially doomed. In the comic, Ezekiel's right-hand man and confidante, Richard (Karl Makinen), is killed in the conflict, leading to the King expressing deep regret over leading his people to war. In the show, Morgan killed Richard in order to placate the Saviors, so could we see him take Richard's place in the war? And it's not just humans who meet their end either — one of the comic's saddest deaths is

poor old Shiva, who gets eaten by walkers while defending Zeke in issue 118. Will The Kingdom's iconic big cat also meet the same fate on the show? From a budgetary point of view, it makes sense that this will happen.

Tara (Alanna Masterson), a character (mostly) unique to the TV series, may also find herself in the firing line — perhaps as the catalyst to bring the isolationist Oceansiders into the war. Their role in the conflict currently stands as negligible, but we have a feeling we haven't seen the last of Cyndie, Natania, and Beatrice just yet. If Tara is set for the chopping block, we hope she gets to raise that middle finger one last time.

The fate of Aaron (Ross Marquand) seems to be relatively following the comic book. He fights bravely during the war and comes out the other side alive but without his boyfriend, Eric (Jordan Woods-Robinson). Rosita (Christian Serratos) and Jesus's (Tom Payne) trajectories are also following the comic closely, albeit with Rosita actually being given more to do in the show.



Both play important roles in what comes after 'All Out War,' so, despite Rosita's seeming death wish, we have a feeling both will be safe come season's end. Equally, we feel Enid (Katelyn Nacon) will survive. Although unique to the show, we believe her character has taken the place of poor Sophia, who died long ago in the series but is still very much alive and well in the comic book.

Of the rest of this now huge cast of characters, we certainly have some favorites who we have concerns about. As soon as he appeared on screen, we've loved Zeke's axe-wielding protector, Jerry (Cooper Andrews), but if we're talking potentially expendable characters... The Savivors, too, will inevitably suffer losses. We hope Simon isn't one of them, because we love actor Steven Ogg, but if Dwight is to live, as he does in the comic, then Simon's prospects don't look good. The wonderfully bored Savior captain Gavin (Jayson Smith Warner) would also be a loss, as he's an interesting character, but we won't miss Jared (Joshua Mikel), who shot Benjamin in the leg. That spoilt brat needs to get his comeuppance, big time.

As we know from bitter experience, the TV series doesn't always follow the comic — indeed, the writers seem to take great joy in messing with comic fans' expectations by switching things up on the show. So, while we can make suppositions left, right and center, the truth is we really don't know who will survive or die this season. We wouldn't have it any other way!



THE LIKELIHOOD OF A TIME JUMP CERTAINLY REMAINS A POSSIBILITY. IN THE BOOK, IT HELPED RESET MUCH AFTER THE CARNAGE OF 'ALL OUT WAR.'

that immediately followed the end of the war (issue 126).

The likelihood of the time jump has been much discussed, and it certainly remains a possibility, especially given the last shot in the San Diego Comic-Con trailer of Old Man Rick. In the book, it helped reset much after the carnage of 'All Out War' — instead of the constant struggle for survival, we meet the characters


after two years of sustained peace, happier, healthier, but also perhaps slightly less prepared for conflict than they were previously. If the jump does happen, it would not be in season eight, but depending on where the next season ends up we could see the jump happen between seasons eight and nine.



It's fascinating to think that this next season could be the end of a long, unbroken fight for survival for Rick and his friends.

Ultimately, if there's one thing that the past seven years of *The Walking Dead* has taught us, it's that nothing is predictable. The writers and producers have honored the comic both tonally and thematically, but the story is up for grabs. Season eight could be the most faithful one yet, or diverge hugely from the printed page. We will know for sure soon enough... •





STEPPING UP!

SINCE HIS FRACTIOUS FIRST APPEARANCE IN SEASON FIVE (WHEN, YOU MAY REMEMBER, HE WAS PUNCHED IN THE FACE BY RICK GRIMES), AARON HAS BECOME ONE OF RICK AND ALEXANDRIA'S MOST FAITHFUL STALWARTS OVER THE PAST TWO SEASONS. UNQUESTIONABLY BRAVE, EVEN FROM THE OUTSET, AARON HAS ALSO SHOWN A STEELY SIDE TO HIS CHARACTER, SUPPORTING RICK'S DECISION TO LEAD A PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE AGAINST THE SAVIORS AND STANDING FIRMLY BY HIS SIDE AT THE TUMULTUOUS ENDING TO SEASON SEVEN. THIS IS PERHAPS A SURPRISING TRAIT GIVEN HIS CARING AND HUMANE OUTLOOK ON LIFE. THE CHARACTER'S STEADY DEVELOPMENT OVER THE PAST TWO SEASONS OR SO HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY ACTOR ROSS MARQUAND, WHO TELLS *TWDM* HE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HOW FANS REACT TO AARON'S (AND THE REST OF THE GROUP'S) DECISION TO GO TO WAR WITH NEGAN AND THE SAVIORS IN THE COMING SEASON.

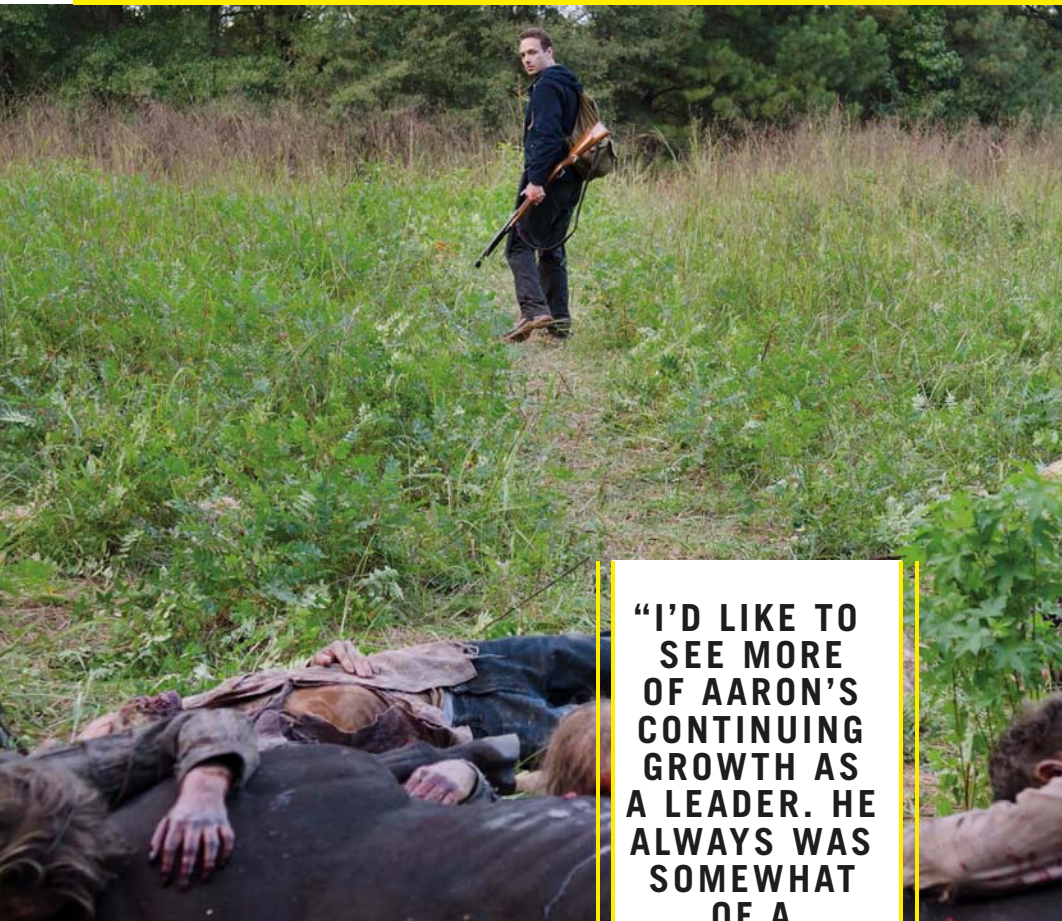
INTERVIEW & WORDS: TOBY WEIDMANN



The entirety of season seven was about this power struggle between these very different groups," actor Ross Marquand tells *TWDM*, summarizing the events of the last season. This not only saw the deaths of some true fan favorites, but also the introduction of several new survivor groups and characters (some very much destined for *The Walking Dead* immortality). The most horrific and compelling of these was Negan (Jeffrey Dean Morgan), whose Savivors spent most of the season sadistically tormenting Rick Grimes (Andrew Lincoln) and his followers.

By season's end, these disparate groups had formed allegiances, taking sides in what is set to be the driving force for season eight: war. On the one side, there's Rick and the Alexandrians, the Hilltop colonists, and the knights of The Kingdom, using 'borrowed' weapons from the isolationist Oceansiders (although we have a feeling we haven't seen the last of them). On the other, there's the massed ranks of the Savivors, joined by the outlandish Scavengers, led by Jadis (Pollyanna McIntosh). In season seven, we saw "how these groups have gone about their everyday lives, how they have existed in this world following the apocalypse," notes Marquand. "[For season eight,] taking care of Negan is the big aesthetic. He is the reason for their existence. He's the reason for their survival now, and for their desire to fight back."





"I'D LIKE TO SEE MORE OF AARON'S CONTINUING GROWTH AS A LEADER. HE ALWAYS WAS SOMEWHAT OF A LEADER IN ALEXANDRIA."

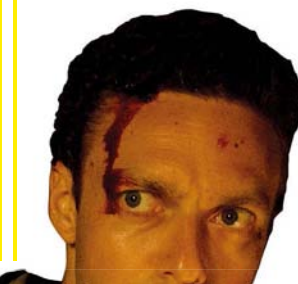


Marquand adds that he feels the "vibe" at the end of season seven was very different from how season six's terrifying cliffhanger left things off. Where that season ended with a sense of hopelessness and dread – with Rick on his knees – season seven finished with Rick standing tall alongside his allied forces, despite suffering some major losses. "Hopefully, the feeling the fans were left with was one of an immense shift having occurred. Leadership had shifted around. People were lost, but I hope there was a deep sense that we were at the end of our rope and there was only one thing

we could do now, and that's fight back. For the fans who prayed for that all season, we finally saw them say, 'Let's do this!'"

LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Leadership is a theme that crops up a lot in *TWDM's* conversation with Marquand, a subject we have covered in depth in previous issues of the magazine. While not a leader in the traditional sense, it's certainly true that Marquand's character, Aaron, has the all-important traits woven into his make-up that would make him a trustworthy commander.





Rick's group, and some of the people of Alexandria, never really saw him as one of the main leaders because he was out recruiting a lot. He was outside of the walls and, frankly, Deanna (Tovah Feldshuh) was there, so he didn't need to be.

"With Deanna's passing, there was a real absence of leadership in the community, and there was a need for new strong leaders who would stand up and fight. His background in diplomacy has served him and the community well, and it could continue to serve everyone very well. He's trying to live a diplomatic life, from his past in Washington DC, but there's a point where he realizes that's not going to work."

PEACE FOR OUR TIME?

It's the latter characteristic that has set Aaron apart from other similarly more pacifist figures in the series, most notably Morgan (Lennie James). When quizzed about how he feels Aaron from season five would view the Aaron at the end of season seven, Marquand notes that, "he'd be very surprised by the shift that's happened. I don't think anyone likes killing in this show, least of all Morgan, who clearly has the biggest problem with it. Morgan and Aaron see eye-to-eye in their belief that people are inherently good, but where they differ is that Aaron isn't afraid to kill if he has to. I think that's been the biggest thing for him, the realization that sometimes even a proactive, pre-emptive strike against a group like the Saviors – something that he might not otherwise feel comfortable with at all – is maybe the only way to go. He's willing to take up arms against their enemies because they will not show the same sympathy or respect towards us."

The most notable split in Morgan and Aaron's outlook came in season six's 'Not Tomorrow Yet'

when Aaron stood with Rick in his plan to attack the Saviors first (and hopefully dispatch Negan) in direct opposition to Morgan. That plan ultimately failed, leading to the horrific events of 'Last Day On Earth' and 'The Day Will Come When You Won't Be,' which, in turn, saw Rick's complete capitulation to Negan's tyrannical rule. Ultimately, it was the events of the seventh season's mid-season finale, 'Hearts Still Beating' – which included Aaron not only risking his life to source Negan's quota of supplies but also receiving a merciless beating at the hands of the Saviors – that prompted Rick's change of heart and the decision to fight back.

GOING TO THE DARK PLACE

"That was my favorite episode to date," Marquand says. "It was not just heavy with action and physical acting, but it was heavy with emotional acting, too. Andy [Lincoln] and I, and the rest of the cast, really had to go to some dark places in that episode. The finale of that episode – where Negan squares off with the entire town, saying, 'This would have been so much simpler if you'd followed my decree. Instead, I'm killing two of your cherished members of the community. They're gone now,' – was a pretty

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP LEFT: Aaron's search for Buttons (the horse does not go well). TOP RIGHT & BOTTOM: Season six's 'Start To Finish' saw Aaron leading the Alexandrians to support Rick's fight against a herd. THIS PAGE, TOP: Aaron's search for license plates accidentally led the Wolves to the Alexandria Safe-Zone ('Conquer'). ABOVE: In their fight against the Saviors, Aaron has been on Rick's side since the very beginning ('Last Day On Earth').

For instance, we know he's courageous and a good judge of character, having spent several years outside the walls of Alexandria recruiting survivors into the Safe-Zone's charge. We know he's mentally tough, having revealed to Daryl (Norman Reedus) that he and his partner, Eric (Jordan Woods-Robinson), have had to overcome homophobia both pre- and post-apocalypse. We know he's a humanitarian – his former life as a politico, helping others, was a clear example of that. And yet he's not averse to making tough decisions and following them through. One thing is for sure, in season eight, Aaron will be on the frontlines of Rick's army in the coming war.

"I'd like to see more of Aaron's continuing growth as a leader," Marquand says about how his character could develop in season eight. "He always was somewhat of a leader in Alexandria, but I think a lot of the members of

LEFT & BELOW: 'Hearts Still Beating' is Marquand's favorite episode of *The Walking Dead* to date. As well as the physical side (including fighting walkers in a lake), the actors were challenged with some compelling emotional drama.



intense statement. Moving into season eight, that's going to be the hardest thing for the group to contend with. They tried so hard to live by this man's standards, tried to play by his rules, and it just wasn't working, over and over again."

He adds: "Rick's whole outlook was, 'My heart's still beating, right? We're living, we're breathing, we're surviving.' That was the whole discussion between Rick and Aaron: is it enough just to survive, even though we've lost our humanity, we've been emasculated completely by the Savivors, and we don't have any control?"

By the end of season seven, we found out the answer to that question: a big fat no! And thank goodness for that. For all his charms, wonderfully colorful language, and intimidating screen presence (seriously, we love JDM here at *TWDM* Towers), Negan needs to get his comeuppance. Whether it will happen this season or not, we simply don't know (and even if we did, we wouldn't tell you, spoilers, etc).

"I do see Negan as a villain," Marquand notes, "despite his rationalizations of the way he acts and the things he does. To my mind, there's no excuse for what he's doing. I can certainly understand why some people might think he's just a variation of



Rick; if Rick had gone down the path Negan went down, he could have wound up like him. But to me, a strong leader would never do that. Rick and his group stand for what is right and what is good, and sometimes, unfortunately, that means fighting and killing."

SEVEN'S SEA CHANGES

Interestingly, the reason to fight has altered dramatically since the beginning of the series. Before season six, the biggest battle Rick's group faced in trying to survive was fending off the undead. Now, the biggest threat is very much a living one. (And no, we haven't forgotten about the Governor, but he was never as dominant a menace as Negan and his army of followers.)

Marquand is in agreement. "In the beginning, right up through to season five, it was about surviving the zombies and building

"‘HEARTS STILL BEATING’ WAS HEAVY WITH PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ACTING. WE REALLY WENT TO SOME DARK PLACES IN THAT EPISODE."



“IN THE BEGINNING, IT WAS ABOUT SURVIVING THE ZOMBIES... TO GET OUR GOODS AND RESOURCES AND JUST START OVER. NOW IT’S NOT THAT AT ALL.”

WHO THE HELL IS...?

NAME: Ross Marquand

AMC'S *THE WALKING DEAD* CHARACTER: Aaron

DATE OF BIRTH: August 22

PLACE OF BIRTH: Fort Collins, Colorado

BIOGRAPHY: Marquand grew up in Colorado, attending its university in Boulder to study Theater. He moved to Los Angeles where he made quite a reputation for himself, not only as an actor but also as a talented impressionist. Among the famous voices he has performed are James Gandolfini and Christopher Walken for *Conan*, and Ben Affleck, Matthew McConaughey, and Kevin Spacey for *Animation Domination High-Def*. He also played screen legend Paul Newman in an episode of AMC's *Mad Men*. We highly recommend watching Marquand's hilarious 'Celebrity Nano-Impressions' episode for *Vanity Fair* on YouTube.

TIDBIT: Marquand reveals one of his favorite moments while filming the show came in season seven's 'Hearts Still Beating.' In this episode, Rick (Andrew Lincoln) and Aaron attempt to raid a houseboat, anchored in the middle of a

lake surrounded by floating walkers. A terrifying prospect for the characters, but the reality of shooting such a scene was entirely different. Naturally, Lincoln and Marquand are not the only ones there, with members of the crew wading in the lake to capture the action, many working topless because of Atlanta's baking heat.

"It was really funny," Marquand explains. "One of our camera guys, Cooper [Dunn], was in the water, and he let off this primal screech. He's got this massive camera rig on his shoulder, and he almost dropped it in the water. It's not uncommon to find snakes or snapping turtles, or even alligators around there. So we were all worried and asked, 'What did you feel?' And he said, 'This little fish, I think it bit my nipple.' It was the most hilarious thing. We still give him a hard time over it."

(Source: IMDb)

ROSS OF IRON

A select filmography of Ross Marquand...

2017 *The Last Tycoon*
 2016 *Sheep & Wolves*
 2016 *Deadbeat*
 2015 *Spare Change*
 2015 *Impress Me* (TV series – 13 episodes)
 2014 *Camera Trap*
 2014 *Amira & Sam*
 2013 *Mad Men* (TV series – one episode)
 2013 *Down And Dangerous*
 2012 *Broken Roads*
 2010 *Woodshop*
 2010 *Happily After*
 2009 *A Lonely Place For Dying*
 2009 *Love Vampires* (TV series – five episodes)

Ross Marquand on IMDb: www.imdb.com/name/nm2739851

up enough of a buffer between us and them so that we could have a normal life. To get our goods and resources and just start over. And now it's not that at all. The walkers are almost a tertiary threat; they are in the background. At this point, we all know how to dispatch walkers in pretty simplistic fashion – it's not exactly easy, but it's not as arduous as it used to be. Now, it's about how we take over this group, specifically Negan; because once you cut off the head, the rest should be easy, right?"

Hmm, time will tell on that one...

One other big change in the series has been the sheer number of characters that now populate *The Walking Dead* world. Season seven saw the introduction of The Kingdom, Oceanside, the Saviors (properly), and the Scavengers. And they are not just background color either; several major (and memorable) characters to the story were added in season seven. Marquand is full of praise for the writers of the show, who have not only managed to seamlessly introduce these characters but also to give them moments to shine.

"There's a lot of expectation with this show," Marquand says, "and as an actor you want to do the best you can with the material you're given. The great thing about [the writers] is that they've done a fantastic job of giving everyone, however big this cast is, an arc. We feel like we've got somewhere that we are going. That takes immense care and a lot of sacrifices to storylines. I would imagine it's a lot simpler to write for five or six people, but when you're writing for upwards of 25, 30 main characters, that's a lot of people to contend with. I'm surprised and very grateful that they've given all of us an arc. They really divvied up the storyline in a big way for all of us."

As fans of the character, *TWDM* hopes Aaron's development continues in season eight. We would certainly like to see more of his relationship with his partner, Eric – they are one of the strongest and most sympathetic couples in the entire show – as well as witness Aaron shine on the battlefield (hero moment, please, Mr Gimple!). We also hope he remains strong in his faith about the good in humanity, despite the dark times that inevitably lie ahead. But, as the saying goes, a man's gotta do, what a man's gotta do... •

PRIDE & PREJUDICE

Life in a world overrun by the undead – where threats loom from both the living and the dead – is hard enough in and of itself. So much so that prejudice towards anyone who is different from the ‘norm’ seems ludicrous when compared with the biggest problem: fighting for survival. This is certainly the approach *The Walking Dead* has taken when tackling such issues as gender, race and sexual equality, concerns that sadly still trouble our own modern societies. These things simply don’t matter in *The Walking Dead*’s fictional, somewhat atemporal storyline, and yet the representation of such characters does very much matter to its many fans. *TWDM* takes a look at *The Walking Dead*’s representation of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer (LGBTQ) community through its characters to discover whether it should be proud of its track record or whether more could be done.

WORDS: LEXI CUMMINS





It is now commonplace to have queer characters at the forefront of science fiction and horror, tackling the crux of fear, allegorical or otherwise.

Horror fiction, much like science fiction, is an unquestionably allegorical genre. Some of the earliest horror stories have been read as queer allegories, such as *Frankenstein* (Mary Shelley) and *Carmilla* (Sheridan La Fanu), the Italian, female-led vampire predecessor to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. In these stories, the crux of fear is a monstrous creature who is inherently 'othered,' or ostracized from society and/or publicly hunted down, with little to no attempts made by society at large to understand or relate to them.

While these stories are fascinating and provide plenty of fodder for an entirely separate article, horror, and the queer stories within the genre, has come a long way since the female-identified, lady-hunting vampires of La Fanu. It is now (finally, at last) commonplace to have queer characters at the forefront of science fiction and horror stories, tackling the crux of fear (allegorical or otherwise), instead of carefully shrouding them in ambiguity. The type of queer representation matters, especially in genre

fiction – there must be more than a token character sprinkled in throughout the story to have accurate and successful representation.

The Walking Dead, both the comic and its televised smash-hit counterpart, is one of the most representative mainstream genre stories of the now. It went from the proverbial zero to 60, starting off with a small sampling of largely heterosexual-presenting characters and expanding its diversity proportionally as the fictional world grew larger and larger. Set in a modern (but still oddly atemporal), slightly alternate universe, it is imperative that the characters accurately reflect the population that might have been living in today's Atlanta, Georgia, when the dead returned to walk the Earth – including people of all races, genders, and sexual orientations.

The thing that both iterations of *The Walking Dead* have completely nailed in their representation is the refusal to ascribe any major significance to the characters' sexual orientations, ie the LGBTQ characters have no major storylines rooted in their queerness. *The Walking Dead* is hardly a utopian fantasy

and prejudice is still very much addressed, but when circumstances are dire and folks need to band together against deadly threats – both living and dead – the stigma attached to being queer is greatly reduced in favor of that character's value to the community.

AARON AND ERIC

Aaron is the first canonically homosexual character encountered by protagonist Rick Grimes and company

in the comic – although Tara beats him by more than a season in the TV show. He is a member of the Alexandria Safe-Zone, where he serves as a recruiter for the community alongside his boyfriend, Eric. In both the comic and the show, Aaron stumbles upon Rick and his group, who mistrust him right away – just as they would any other new face, regardless of their sexual orientation. Aaron's sexuality has no bearing on the way Rick interacts with him or





Eric, and in time, Rick comes to trust both of them.

A significant move on the part of the TV show was to show the couple share an onscreen kiss when they are first reunited after being apart (season five's 'The Distance'). Since the show has such a wide reach and diverse fan base, this moment had quite an effect on the fandom, angering a vocal few, but delighting far more. The scene was a turning point for the show that engendered joy in the LGBTQ contingent of its fan base, since it was the first time that gay male love was unequivocally normalized in canon. In addition to normalizing a healthy and functional gay relationship, Aaron and Eric are also hugely instrumental in other major characters' development and storylines.

DARYL DIXON

In season five's 'Forget,' the Alexandrians throw a party to welcome Rick and his fellow survivors to the community. Daryl Dixon, Rick's scruffy,

Daryl is a blank slate for the writers. He is a well fleshed out and fascinating character, due in no small part to his ambiguous sexuality.

[Aaron and Eric's reunion kiss] had quite an effect on the fandom, angering a vocal few, but delighting far more.



resourceful post-apocalyptic best friend and right-hand man, is clearly still uncomfortable with their recent domestic transition and decides to skip it. As he is walking through the quiet streets, Aaron beckons him inside the home he shares with Eric for a spaghetti dinner.

Daryl is an anomalous character who has always been withdrawn, maintaining his lone wolf status despite the acceptance and love from the rest of the group (with perhaps the exception of his bond with Carol). In addition to the personality

traits that differentiate him from more gregarious folk, it is worth mentioning that Daryl's sexuality has been never been openly addressed or revealed on the show.

Aaron identifies Daryl's 'otherness' and remarks that both he and Eric know what it is like to be an outsider as a way of connecting with him, implying that prejudice persists even in one of the most idyllic communities of the post-apocalyptic world. Aaron invites Daryl to join him as a recruiter for Alexandria, and though Daryl displays no outward excitement, it is clear

that he finally feels as though he has a place within his group's new home.

Daryl, who is completely unique to the show and has no comic counterpart, is a blank slate for the writers. He is a well fleshed out and fascinating character, due in no small part to (or perhaps despite) his ambiguous sexuality. In the second and third seasons of the show, Daryl roundly rejects Carol's advances and responds bashfully but negatively to her innuendo-laden jokes, but this has no impact on the two becoming dear friends and confidantes later in the series.

In the fourth season, Daryl develops a close relationship with Beth Greene when they are separated from the group, and many viewers believed that they should have – or would have – hooked up if not for the younger Greene's demise. Regardless, Daryl has shown neither sexual nor romantic interest in any other characters, which is a rare and refreshing characteristic for a male genre hero.

Norman Reedus, who portrays Daryl, said in an interview that early on in the show's history the creators had toyed with the idea of making Daryl canonically gay. The actor expressed his interest in pursuing this, but eventually the idea fell to the wayside. It was Robert Kirkman who announced that Daryl is straight on a 2014 episode of AMC's *Talking Dead*, a weekly post-*The Walking Dead* recap show that features cast and crew members. The subject has since remained untouched (*until this year's SDCC, see page 13 – ed.*), but it left many viewers wondering why Kirkman chose this forum to reveal Daryl's sexuality, rather than weaving it into the TV series' narrative. Nothing is set in stone, and perhaps the writers will flip the script and make Daryl queer – whether that be homosexual, bisexual, or asexual.

Tara has become a nuanced, well-developed main character who is integral to the main group.

TARA CHAMBLER & DENISE CLOYD

While having several gay male characters – especially heroic bad-asses – is extremely important, the comic does lack lesbian representation. Luckily, the TV show makes up for it. Tara Chambler is *almost* a unique character to the series: she does feature in *The Walking Dead* novel, *Rise Of The Governor*, where she is known as Tara Chalmers, but her character is quite different and her sexuality is never explored. The TV show's Tara is, however, an out lesbian who first appears as a part of the Governor's crew (in season four's 'Live Bait') and menaces Rick and his people for the second time during the first half of season four.

Tara does not have an official 'coming out' moment, rather, she is depicted in a normalized same-sex

relationship that started pre-canon with a woman named Alisha (you may remember her – Lizzie blew her brains out during the assault on the prison, protecting Tyreese).

Despite her initial unsavory alliance with the Governor, Tara was accepted by Rick's group (particularly Glenn Rhee and Maggie Greene), giving her character the opportunity to change and grow. She has become a nuanced, well-developed main character who is integral to the main group. Despite the heartache of leaving Alisha behind in favor of abandoning the Governor and his nefarious plot against Rick (and the later knowledge of her death – as revealed in 'Us'), Tara finds love again in Alexandria with Denise Cloyd, the community's resident psychiatrist-turned-medic.

Tara and Denise's relationship is portrayed sweetly, though not as fleshed out as it maybe could have been. Unfortunately, just as Denise was coming into her own as a character, she was killed by Dwight, one of Negan's men. Much like *Game Of Thrones*, *The Walking Dead*

is notorious for indiscriminately killing off its characters – no one is safe, after all. Queer characters are no exception, despite the pushback against the 'Bury Your Gays' trope, a commonplace term in fandom to describe the untimely killing of queer characters in popular media, particularly



As a character, Denise openly spoke about her anxieties, a rarely explored facet in genre tales.



PHOTOS: Gene Page/AMC.

lesbian characters (such as Commander Lexa on *The 100* and Charlie on *Supernatural*).

The timing of Denise's death was particularly poor, following in the immediate wake of Commander Lexa's death. And it didn't help that the equivalent character shot through the head by Dwight's arrow in the comic was as about as red-blooded a heterosexual male as they come, Abraham. Additionally, Denise was developing into an interesting character not only through her relationship with Tara but also through Daryl, with whom she had formed a strained but endearing sibling-like bond. As a character, Denise also openly spoke about her anxieties, another rarely explored facet in genre tales. The purpose of her death seemed mainly to drive Daryl to seek hot-headed vengeance against the Savivors – an instinctual impulse that would tragically lead to the death of a series favorite come the premiere of season seven.

Luckily, Tara (who missed out on Negan's



upon which Tara stumbled in season seven.

PAUL 'JESUS' MONROE/ROVIA

The biggest canonically gay character in *The Walking Dead* universe is Jesus, aka Paul Rovia in the show and Paul Monroe in the comic. Jesus is not only one of the most highly esteemed people in the Hilltop community, but also a martial arts expert and an all-around top-notch fighter, scavenger, and master of reconnaissance.

In the comic, Jesus has more than platonic feelings for a Hilltop nurse, Alex, though their relationship never makes it beyond friendship due to their different roles in the community.

However, they do share a kiss when Jesus reveals how he used to feel about Alex, but, by that time, Alex is already dating someone else. Alex even notes that he thinks Jesus and Aaron would make a good couple (Eric died during the war with the Savivors) and tries to set them up together. It will be interesting to see how this relationship develops.

On the TV show, Jesus' sexuality was stealthily introduced in the show's seventh season. In 'The Other Side,' he tells Maggie that he grew up in a group home, revealing that he has always had trouble getting close to people, including friends and "boyfriends." As far as coming out on television, it was a non-moment: Maggie had no adverse reaction to his orientation and the two continued their chat.

Though many fans of the comic already knew that the

Solidifying one of the show's main male heroes as homosexual, rather than relying on fans' knowledge of the comic, was a huge step.





introduced as bisexual: he tells Sasha that she has him wrapped around her little finger. He specifies that it's "not a man-woman thing," and he would feel the same "even if she had a dick." The

intention behind the inclusion of this dialogue is nebulous, but the bisexually-coded wording is worth noting.

Unfortunately, bisexual folks are chronically underrepresented in pop culture, and it is perhaps a reach to hope for a canonically bisexual, male

main character in such a high-profile series. Plus, it might do more harm than good to have a villain be the first widely seen bi character on TV. On the one hand, it is imperative to have queer representation across the

board — heroes, villains, and everything in-between — but on the other hand, perhaps it would be best to introduce another, less polarizing character as bisexual to the masses first.

Though far from perfect, *The Walking Dead* has done a top-notch job of upping and maintaining its LGBTQ representation and visibility over the years. The story relies heavily on strong, interesting relationships between solid characters, who occasionally must take down a horde of zombies or vengeful fellow survivors. Where many genre series would insert an obligatory gay character or erase queerness altogether, *The Walking Dead's* narrative features a bevy of queer characters in various real, imperfect, human relationships, both romantic and platonic. It would be nice to see a few more LGBTQ characters added into both the comic and show,

but those who have been included have been well portrayed.

Rather than being a defining characteristic at the root of a plot twist or story arc, diverse sexual orientations are successfully presented as just another given. It will be a treat to see existing queer characters continue to flourish and new characters come to light as the worlds of both the show and the comic expand. After all, in the face of flesh-eating walkers and homicidal overlords, maintaining communities, fostering loving relationships, and, above all, survival are much more important than gaps caused by pettiness and prejudice. •



character is gay, there was no guarantee that his onscreen counterpart would be, what with the show's multiple divergences from comic canon (for example, Denise is not a lesbian in the comic), so it was a big moment in the series' history. Solidifying one of the show's main male heroes (and one who is a true bad-ass as well) as canonically homosexual, rather than relying on fans' knowledge of the comic lore, was a huge step.

NEGAN

Taking a slightly different tangent, a character exhibiting subtle queer coding is the

show's current 'Big Bad,' the leader of the Savivors himself: Negan. That statement may surprise you. Yes, we do know that the bat-wielding villain was canonically married to a woman pre-apocalypse in the comic (for whom his barbed wire-wrapped baseball bat Lucille is named), and yes, we also know he is 'married' to multiple women within the walls of his Sanctuary (in both the comic and show) — all of whom receive special treatment in return for their hands in marriage.

However, in the season seven finale, Negan has a conversation with Sasha that leaves room for him to be





The dust has now settled on season three of *The Walking Dead: A Telltale Series*, entitled *A New Frontier*, with all five episodes now available to play on PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC, and handheld devices. *TWDM* takes an in-depth look at the season as a whole, with a breakdown of the storyline's highs and lows and a guide to all the major characters. Plus, we showcase some exclusive concept art.

WORDS: Chris Schilling

Without giving too much away, there's a key change at the end of this third full season of *The Walking Dead: A Telltale Series*. At the conclusion of

A New Frontier's final episode, rather than simply being reminded of the decisions you made, you are informed instead how your actions affected your overall experience with the game's key characters. It marks a subtle but discernible shift in the series: though your choices still affect the plot, the more dramatic, tangible results are on the relationships you forge with the central cast.

It's the kind of difference you don't immediately notice, but you will undoubtedly spot the presentational improvements from the off. There's still a certain stiffness in the animation, but Telltale's new engine makes a clear difference to the quality of the art,

MEET THE CHARACTERS

CLEMENTINE

VOICED BY:

MELISSA HUTCHISON



A series protagonist throughout Telltale's *The Walking Dead* series, Clementine is older in *A New Frontier*, more jaded and world-weary but still that same lovable character we first met way back in season one's premiere episode, 'A New Day.' Clementine's innocence has certainly dissipated — predominantly due to the events of season two and its aftermath (no matter how you chose to end that season) — and she's definitely better at kicking ass, but she's still an inherently good person at her core.

The wonderful Melissa Hutchison returns to voice this teenage Clem and does an amazing job of capturing all the heartbreak the character has gone through over the past two seasons in the cadence of her voice. The beating heart of the series, it's almost unthinkable to consider Telltale's *The Walking Dead* games without Hutchison's Clem, and we can't wait to see where the series takes them both next.

A CHARM

Quicker transitions heighten the excitement of the set pieces, and button prompts are more thoughtfully and intuitively deployed.

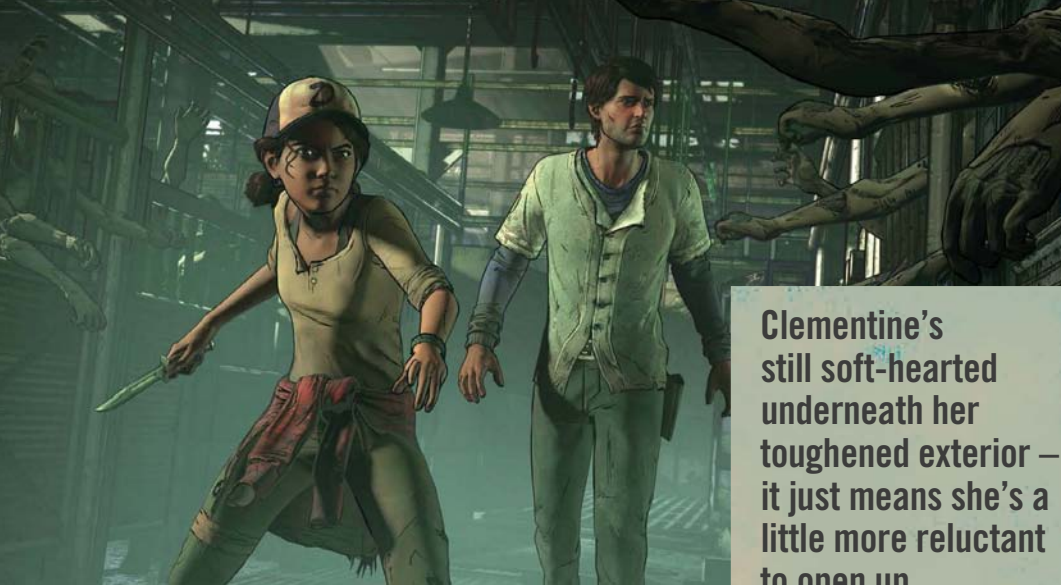
with better lighting and more detailed characters. Quicker transitions between shots heighten the excitement of the action-packed set-pieces, and button prompts are more thoughtfully and intuitively deployed — a closer match for the physical actions they are conveying.

OLD HEADS AND NEW

All of this is highlighted in a brilliantly tense opening flashback that begins episode one, appropriately titled 'Ties That Bind, Part One,' which takes us back to the very beginning of the apocalypse, as a family gathering is violently interrupted when a recently deceased elderly relative suddenly rises from his deathbed. Here,

we're introduced to the season's new protagonist, Javier Garcia, a washed-up former baseball star who proves he's still got one hell of a swing. Indeed, one of the great pleasures of this series is just how often he gets to use a bat to take out the undead: the sound of aluminum meeting bone is worryingly satisfying.

The story proper picks up a few years later. With his hot-headed brother, David, having seemingly disappeared after driving his mother to hospital following the incident, Javi is now playing the role of parent to his brother's kids: the smart, sensible Mariana and the more surly, taciturn Gabe. During that time he's also grown closer to David's wife, Kate. Their bond feels



Clementine's still soft-hearted underneath her toughened exterior – it just means she's a little more reluctant to open up.

natural, despite their distinctly unnatural situation, as they eke out a life together on the road, trading affectionate jabs with one another. Indeed, there's a strong vein of black humor throughout the season, adding some much-needed levity amid the bleak and brutal events

elsewhere – one of the first choices you get to make in the game is Javi deciding whether to smoke weed in front of his sleeping niece and nephew.

They are not the only ones who have had a tough time. Clementine is back, and her opening scenes show that this resourceful young woman has had to grow up quickly. Later, we see exactly why she's more world-weary than ever, in a gruesome flashback sequence that differs depending on who she chose to shoot during the previous season's climax, but which ends up with the same result (there's a brief but very welcome return for Kenny's Gavin Hammon and Jane's Christine Lakin). She's suffered loss in another sense, too: forced by circumstance to give away her "little goofball" – Rebecca's son, AJ. This flinty edge we see to Clem is startling and quite saddening to witness given the emotional investment players have built up with her. Even so, it's clear that she's still soft-hearted underneath that toughened exterior – it just means she's a little more reluctant to open up than before.

UNEASY ALLIES

The two characters meet during an electrifying double-header that opens the season,

as Javi is separated from his family and winds up in a new settlement, Prescott, where he and Clementine both quickly find themselves in trouble.

Since the story is told from Javi's perspective, with Clem only playable during flashbacks, there's a slight disconnect when he's asked to make decisions involving his new ally: we're aware that Clem is a good person, so the choices seem easy. But Javi can't reasonably be expected to know that. Still, it's only a slight misstep during a double-bill that produces a couple of genuine shocks, including a brutal reminder that happy reunions rarely last very long in this world.

This tragedy sets up the series' key conflict, as Javi and family end up in New Richmond, a heavily fortified community led by a group calling themselves The New Frontier, whose followers are branded with a distinctive insignia. Among the rulers is – you guessed it – Javi's brother, David, who is forced to mediate when it turns out that Javi and his new friends have been fighting a violent faction of New Frontier members. As the absentee father tries to reconnect with the family he left behind, new fissures

It's always been the case in Telltale's games that certain paths play out in a more complete and satisfying fashion than others.

JAVI GARCIA

VOICED BY:

JEFF SCHINE

The main playable character in *A New*

Frontier, Javi is a fantastic addition to the series, if a surprising one. Before the release of the season, most players assumed we'd be playing as Clem again, but each season we've predominantly played as a different character, so perhaps the change should not have been so unexpected. The main thrust of the story is Javi and his relationships with his family members, most notably his brother, David, sister-in-law, Kate, and niece and nephew, Marianna and Gabe. The meaning of family is a major theme of this season, particularly whether blood is really thicker than water.

Jeff Schine is one of several new voice actors to join the Telltale universe, and he's a very welcome addition. He invests Javi with both a strong sense of will and a deeply sensitive side, which makes him an interesting and enjoyable character to play. His interactions with Clementine, the new addition to his family in a sense, are the highlight of this season.

DAVID GARCIA

VOICED BY:

ALEX HERNANDEZ

David is one of the most flawed characters ever created in Telltale's *The Walking Dead* series – an emotional bully to his wife, jealous of his younger brother, Javi – and yet there's never any question over his motivations. As someone prone to volatile bouts of anger and violence, David acts and reacts realistically in almost all of the situations he finds himself in, which in turn makes him a believable, if not very likeable, character.

Alex Hernandez was given perhaps the hardest role to play in *A New Frontier*, and he pulls it off with aplomb. He's not an out-and-out villain, like Carver or Logan, and his broken relationship with Javi, Kate and his kids makes his role as one of the season's potential antagonists a tricky one to resolve as the player's loyalties are constantly torn.

KATE GARCIA

VOICED BY:

SHELLY SHENOY

Kate is David's wife and stepmother of Marianna and Gabe.

Her relationship with David was always fractious, even before the apocalypse, and throughout this season there's the underlying feeling that she chose the wrong brother to marry. When she is reunited with David years later after finally giving in to her feelings for Javi, it's this tension between the three that really drives the story at the back end of the season.

Another newcomer to the series, Shelly Shenoy provides one of the outstanding performances of *A New Frontier*. She gives Kate a tough but vulnerable edge, with a healthy dose of wit, cynicism and pathos thrown in for good measure.



FEATURE A NEW FRONTIER

OPPOSITE PAGE: Javier and Clementine are the two playable characters in *A New Frontier*.
THIS PAGE: These are some of the amazing concept art produced pre-game. Depicted are three locations encountered throughout the season, including the outskirts of New Richmond and the cool 'airfield' community of Prescott (middle).



JOAN

VOICED BY:

JAYNE TAINI

Probably the main antagonist of *A New Frontier*, Joan is a tricky customer, who seems reasonable on the surface but uses lies and deceit to make her own situation better. She's one of the four leaders of The New Frontier movement and the community of Richmond. She's also the secret mastermind behind The New Frontier's raids on other survivor communities.

Actress Taini has had a long and illustrious career in film and television, dating back to the early 1980s. She brings a worldly and weary aspect to Joan.



begin to appear in the already fractured relationship with his brother. Seeing your baby brother playing dad is one thing, but Javi and Kate's burgeoning romance threatens to drive an even bigger wedge between the two siblings.

A clutch of other characters is brought into the

dysfunctional family's orbit, from apparently kind-hearted doctor Eleanor to gruff but gentle giant Tripp and the pragmatic Ava (Ally Johnson) who forms an unlikely bond with Clementine. There's even a link to the wider *The Walking Dead* universe, with Paul 'Jesus' Monroe showing up in

episodes two and three. All of these roles are well-performed by the voice actors, with each adding something to the narrative. But it's the Garcia family and Clementine that provide the series' emotional heartbeat, and *A New Frontier* is at its best when they are the main focus of the narrative.

BROTHERS IN ARMS?

The pace is allowed to drop a little during the third and fourth episodes, entitled 'Above The Law' and 'Thicker Than Water,' and on occasion the writing stumbles by manufacturing drama from decisions that feel a little out of character. One betrayal seems especially



The final confrontation between Javi and David is a truly moving moment that proves words can sometimes hit harder than fists.

unlikely, and one or two key moments are rather hastily swept under the carpet. Then again, it's always been the case in Telltale's various story-driven games that certain paths play out in a more complete and satisfying fashion than others, and in general the differences are less pronounced here. So, by the time a dramatic burst of action concludes the fourth episode (with a sudden injection of a series of pacy quick time events), any missteps are all but forgotten.

GABE GARCIA

VOICED BY:

RAYMOND OCHOA

It's a tricky task to take a mopey, hormonal teenage boy character and make him engaging, but that's what Raymond Ochoa did with Gabe. In desperate need of a strong parental figure, Gabe directly causes some of the problems that Javi and the rest of his family face throughout the season.

For one so young, Ochoa already has an impressive list of credits to his name, including *The Good Dinosaur* and *The Angry Birds Movie*, and he is rumored to be in Pixar's *The Incredibles* sequel.



It's the tension of Javi and Kate's relationship, and the anticipation of David's inevitable response when he finds out, that keeps things ticking over nicely during the season's slower moments. Daringly, the writers aren't afraid to paint David as an unsympathetic character: he's prone to outbursts of anger and violence, which can only be partly explained by his military past. His time as a soldier may have given him the discipline a leader needs, but it becomes clear that his temper makes him poorly suited to the job and, by extension, to fatherhood, as he admits to his brother in a touching rooftop conversation.

Extended flashbacks deepen the bond between the two. In one, we see them argue in the batting cages, the older sibling clearly jealous of his brother's skills; later, we see Javi's father ask David and Javi to promise to look out for one another.

All of which makes for some tough choices on the player's part later on, as you're asked to weigh up whether blood really is thicker than water. Or are there some things you simply can't forgive, even when family's involved?

SHAPING THE STORY

Your actions across the four previous episodes shape the ultimate direction of the finale and how these relationships pan out. In a key moment, Clem will make a choice that depends greatly on the way she's been treated by Javi throughout; deferring to him if their connection is strong or deciding for herself if they don't get on so well. But tellingly, it's Javi's bond with David that's detailed first as the credits roll. It's inevitable from the early stages that their sibling rivalry will eventually boil over, but the final confrontation is a truly moving moment that proves words can sometimes hit harder than fists. Regardless of what happens afterwards – and the differences are pretty stark depending on who's still around and what they think of you – it ends in a fittingly low-key fashion.

As for Clementine, she finishes the game in a broadly similar place to where she started it. If you don't have a save file from the two earlier seasons, there's an option to pick from a series of choices

MARIANA GARCIA

VOICED BY: VALE DE LA MAZA

We really liked Mariana, a sensitive child who was perhaps ill-equipped to deal with the harsh realities of a zombie apocalypse. In many ways, she's what Clementine could have become without the help of Lee, Kenny and Jane to guide her. Which makes what happens to her all the more devastating.

If *A New Frontier* is anything to go by, young Mexican actress Vale De La Maza has a bright future ahead of her. Watch this space!



TRIPP

VOICED BY:

TROY HALL

Tough but fair, that's how we'd describe Tripp, the leader of Prescott, the survivor community we first encounter in episode one. He has a gruff exterior – and butts heads with Javi on several occasions depending on the player's choices – but underneath all of that he has a heroic heart.

Troy Hall will be a familiar voice to many gamers, having provided his expert vocal talents to such games as *Red Dead Redemption*, *Alone In The Dark* (2008), and *Star Wars: The Old Republic*.



ELEANOR

VOICED BY:

KELLEY CROWDER

Initially, we thought Eleanor was going to be a rival love interest

for Javi this season, but things turn out quite differently in the end. We weren't completely convinced by the twist in her story, but it is understandable in terms of the game's narrative construction.

Crowder is a relative newcomer to acting, including voice acting, but if *A New Frontier* is a sign of things to come, she could be another one to keep an eye on.

PAUL MONROE

VOICED BY:

BRANDON KEENER

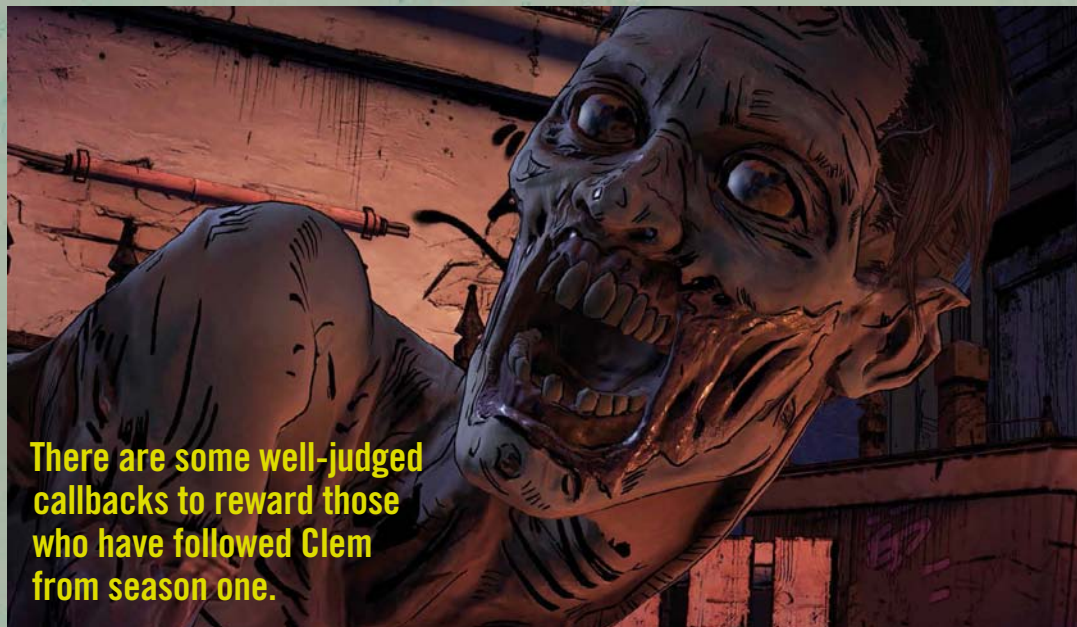
It's always difficult to faithfully recreate

a character that is already well-established, not just in the comic but also now on TV as well, but Telltale did a pretty good job of capturing the heroic and good nature of Paul Monroe. The biggest problem from a story perspective is that because the video game series is considered canon, players know nothing can happen to the character, which does limit the storyline a little as there is no risk.

For fans of the TV show, it's hard to picture Jesus sounding any other way than Tom Payne. The highly accomplished Brandon Keener's interpretation is a little more mysterious and less playful than Payne's, but that's probably more because of how the character has been written.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The Garcia family are on the scavange.

THIS PAGE, TOP: Full marks to the Telltale design, animation and art teams for really upping their game this season. **ABOVE, LEFT & RIGHT:** Early concept work for Jesus, based on the artwork of Charlie Adlard. The image on the right is more how the final design ended up looking.



There are some well-judged callbacks to reward those who have followed Clem from season one.



to recreate her journey so far. In many respects, *A New Frontier* is the least important chapter of her story up to this point, although that isn't to say her character doesn't develop at all: the last of the credit profiles lands on Clem, telling us how her choices have shaped her and her current emotional state. There's also a couple of well-judged callbacks to reward those who have followed Clem from season one:

firstly, when Clem teaches Gabe the trip-and-stab walker-slaying method she learned from Jane, and secondly, when Javi gives her hair a much-needed trim before she sets off alone, determined to find AJ.

As we discovered at SDCC, Clem's story will continue in season four – and we're glad to hear that. Still, it would be a shame if this was the last we saw of Javi, Kate and the rest, as we've grown rather fond of them.

With season four scheduled to be the last of this story (note: the company hasn't ruled out returning to this world), including characters we've met before across the series would be a nice way to end it, as long as it doesn't negatively impact the story.

As it stands, *A New Frontier* isn't exactly a new beginning for Telltale's *The Walking Dead* series, but its focus on character and superior storytelling make this well worth playing. •

CARNIVAL





OF MONSTERS

EXCLUSIVE SEASON SEVEN SET VISIT

It's not often that we get to write about comedy in AMC's *The Walking Dead*—there's precious little humor in a world packed with bandits, killers and the undead—but season seven's 'Say Yes' was tonally quite different to much of the rest of the series. With Rick and Michonne visiting a carnival while out on a scouting mission, fans not only enjoyed some of the show's funniest moments (particularly of the black humor variety) but also some real intimacy between the couple. The Richonne factor was in full effect, and *TWDM* was there on set to witness the fun and games as they happened.

WORDS & INTERVIEWS: Tara Bennett

Even in the waning days of September in 2016, the heat of Georgia never disappoints. Humidity greets us like a particularly annoying friend as we pay our annual visit to the always dynamic AMC's *The Walking Dead* set. Our destination today is rural Gay, Georgia, which is hosting the series for an exterior location shoot featuring Andrew Lincoln and Danai Gurira's Rick and Michonne on a scouting mission to find much-needed supplies to appease the ever-demanding Negan.

It's the third day of shooting 'Say Yes,' the 12th episode of season seven, which is being helmed by series director and executive producer, Greg Nicotero. The setting is a long-abandoned

elementary school, where Rick and Michonne will get the rare opportunity to revel in a fleeting bubble of romance and humor, celebrating one of the show's most famous 'ships: Richonne.

As we amble onto the set, saying hello to the many familiar faces who make up the show's crew, most of whom are in their seventh year of working on *The Walking Dead*, we see how the old pros handle the withering humidity and broiling sun. There are umbrellas opened all around to create forced shade, plenty of water in ice coolers for all to stay hydrated, and in director Greg Nicotero's video village tent (where he monitors the camera shots) there's a fan blowing to help him, Lincoln, and Gurira keep focused and cheerful.



“IF THE WORLD WAS COMING TO AN END, A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD BE GETTING BUSY. SERIOUSLY!” GREG NICOTERO

Speaking of which, Nicotero welcomes us into his lair, proudly sporting his hand-designed T-shirt that features a configuration of the undead à la Queen’s ‘Bohemian Rhapsody.’ Over in the corner, Lincoln is content eating habanero peppers as Gurira shakes her head at the insanity of eating chili peppers in 90-degree heat. All of them are discussing an upcoming Hollywood prop auction catalog that Nicotero is perusing to perhaps add items to his already legendary collection of film memorabilia.

GETTING BUSY!

But work beckons and the trio step out to rehearse an action beat, where Rick encourages Michonne to take out eight walkers compared to his measly one. Gurira, as Michonne, mouths incredulously, “Eight?” as Lincoln’s Rick shrugs back, unfazed by the glaring disparity. In a silent reply, Michonne deadpans beautifully to the camera and everyone laughs at

her pitch-perfect reaction. Seeing this kind of levity featured in the show is beyond rare, and everyone is clearly enjoying the change of pace.

Later, when discussing the lighter mood of many of the episode’s scenes, Nicotero cracks, “Not a lot of people smile on our show, aside from Negan. He’s made up for the *per capita* smiles on *The Walking Dead* in, like, one episode. But I think the biggest challenge on the show, always, is not repeating ourselves. It’s keeping our storylines fresh and learning new things about these people from episode to episode.

“Coming into the home stretch towards the 100th episode, it was interesting and exciting for me to get a chance to explore Rick and Michonne as a couple. In our show, you never really get much of an



opportunity for romance. I think we had one scene with Glenn and Maggie, and two scenes with Abraham and Rosita, and that was kind of it. And if you think about it, if the world was coming to an end, a lot of people would be getting *busy*. Seriously!” he laughs.

Jokes aside, he says: “In this instance, it was really necessary to not only solidify Rick and Michonne as a living and breathing couple, but allow them to have some intimate moments that directly contrast with what they are doing. We were intercutting them being soldiers, and scavenging for Negan, with them being a couple.”



“THIS EPISODE HAS SOME COMICAL ELEMENTS. IT’S NOT LIGHT, BUT ONCE YOU’VE SEEN SO MANY KILLS, TO ME AT LEAST, THIS IS A LITTLE LIGHTER.”

JOHN SANDERS



Back to the scene at hand, walkers in military uniforms, done up by the KNB EFX team, are wandering the school grounds. Rick and Michonne need to clear the way in order for them to get to the outer yard, where the creepy skeleton of a once lively carnival sits in silence... aside from the groans of the walkers lumbering about.

Gurira is placed behind a dumpster near an empty trailer wall that reflects her menacing shadow perfectly, her upcoming

mayhem shown in silhouette.

The sequence needs exactly the right lighting and angle of trajectory for the walker actors to make the visuals work, so it takes a few rehearsals to get it right.

However, Gurira lands her choreography every time, as one would expect from the katana expert she’s become over five seasons. Between takes, Gurira loses none of her cool as she puts on her shades and nurses a Starbucks, like us mere mortals.

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

In the distance, prop master John Sanders is preparing for an upcoming gag featuring a car and a walker in a windshield.

As enthusiastic as always, Sanders shares his love for this episode because of its quirky vibe. “I like the introduction of the carnival,” he says, nodding at the dressed set behind a chain-link fence. “They climb up a school bus, onto a roof and they can kind of see the carnival. Michonne says she can shoot these things, and you think she means the field full of walkers, but no, she shoots a milk bottle off a game stand,” he laughs. “It gives you the idea right away of a carnival atmosphere, and then they fall right through the roof and land in

“ONE OF MY FAVORITE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN RICK AND MICHONNE IS A LITTLE SWORD TOSS. IT’S FUN BECAUSE RICK HAS NEVER USED A SWORD IN THE SHOW.”

JOHN SANDERS





“A GOOD PORTION OF THE OUTDOOR SET, MAYBE 40 TO 50 PERCENT WAS BUILT, AND THE REST WERE CARNIVAL RIDES WE RENTED AND DISTRESSED.” GREG NICOTERO

the middle of something they need to survive their story.

“So, this episode has some comical elements to it throughout,” he continues. “It’s not light, but once you’ve seen so many kills, to me at least, this is a little bit lighter. And some setups become a little more comical, just because they don’t go the way they want them to go. Plus, later on, we get some interaction between Rick and Michonne, and one of my favorites is a little sword toss. It’s fun because Rick has never used a sword in the show.”

Turning his attention back to his current setup, the stunt team is busy working to place a walker stuntman into the windshield of a car that Rick will need to move in a later scene. Sanders explains: “Greg and his team came up with a really cool concept here, because it’s not what you think it’s going to be. It looks like Rick’s just going to tear the walker out of there, but he goes to grab the boot, and nope, the foot comes off. And then he goes to drag it out by the waist, and oops, the whole waist rips off. Rick can then throw the last piece of the body to the side of the road. The walker is still alive, so it’s pretty fun.”

ONE HELLUVA RIDE

Meanwhile, waiting to change lighting for a new scene, Nicotero acknowledges the carnival backdrop in the distance they will be shooting later in the week.



“I had scouted this school location a long time ago for another episode, and we didn’t use it,” he notes. “I would say a good portion of the outdoor set, maybe 40 to 50 percent was built, and the rest were carnival rides we rented and distressed. But the geography and choreography of making sure we have one ride at one end of the park and another ride at the other end of the park, so Rick and Michonne can get separated, is very important.

“What’s interesting is that when they’re standing on the roof and looking out over the carnival, it’s one of the few times that we acknowledge what the world was like before the walkers took over. Aside from being up in Atlanta, or at the Big Spot in season four, it’s been our world in the now. Michonne even says, ‘Maybe there is something worth



fighting for, and maybe we will be able to get back to this?’ It was a thematic choice to remind Rick and Michonne – and our audience – that there’s a world out there, and it’s not all dead. Maybe there is an opportunity to look forward to getting back to that existence, and things are happy. It’s not all about death. It’s about life.”

THE WINNING FORMULA

Weeks after he completes shooting the entire episode, Nicotero reconnects with us to assess the final piece. He admits he has a lot of love for several moments, such as



“[RICK AND MICHONNE EATING BY CANDLELIGHT] WAS MY *SIXTEEN CANDLES* MOMENT. THERE WERE SOME FUN, INTIMATE MOMENTS THERE.”
GREG NICOTERO



Rick and Michonne eating dehydrated meals by candle light. “That was my *Sixteen Candles* moment,” he smiles. “I blocked it like that because I really thought there were some fun, intimate moments there. It was so important for me that we felt that and we believe it.

“The episode is a series of wins,” Nicotero reflects. “As we start going through stuff with them, we start realizing that this is a win when they fall through the roof and they don’t die. They’re both laughing and land on top of a pad in a gymnasium, which is ridiculous. They are laughing about it

and look in the corner and see pallets filled with food. It’s that series of wins that lead us into a moment where the two of them really do feel invincible. Which is why, in that moment in the carnival, where Michonne thinks Rick is killed, it all comes crashing back. We’re lulling them into a false sense of security that they can’t die. When she realizes, ‘Holy shit, I almost lost you!’ His response is, ‘That’s OK, because that’s the world. It’s not about losing me or losing you. It’s about continuing our way of life.’”

He adds that he thought that the scene with Rick and Michonne in the

van was one of the most powerful scenes that they shot all year.

“I remember shooting it. Andy and Danai and I were looking at each other going, ‘This is the heart of the show, right here.’ Her fear of losing him and him encouraging her, and reiterating to her that it’s not about them. It becomes a very important scene in the beginning of season eight,” he teases.

With a double-digit number of episodes under his directorial guidance now, Nicotero admits that it’s hard to rank his efforts. But he does say that ‘Say Yes’ stands out because it’s so unusual.

“It was a challenging episode because the tone was so dramatically different,” he muses, “and that’s what I liked about it. Opportunities that I’ve had to interject some comedy and some light moments, I always like exploring those. I’ve shot a couple, and there are times they haven’t made it into episodes because the timing or mood isn’t quite right.

“With this one, I was excited about really getting a chance to strip away a lot of what Danai would bring to the table in terms of Michonne, since she’s a very closed-off character. To be able to see that side of her gave Danai a great opportunity to do something a little different, as well as for Andy. I was really pleased with the episode. I think it’s a great episode, and Andy and Danai gave us new flavors of those characters.” •

“[WE WANTED] TO REMIND RICK AND MICHONNE THAT THERE’S A WORLD OUT THERE AND IT’S NOT ALL DEAD... IT’S NOT ALL ABOUT DEATH. IT’S ABOUT LIFE.” GREG NICOTERO



SCENE THIS?

With season eight pending, we thought it would be a good opportunity to reflect on the previous season (as a reminder of the story so far), along with showcasing some rather wonderful images from behind the scenes. **WORDS:** Toby Weidmann



THE BATMAN

So the season returned with a bang, or perhaps that should be a thud. Make that many thuds. 'The Day Will Come When You Won't Be' was a brutal episode from start to finish – probably the most violent episode to date, which was too much for some to stomach.

Personally, we didn't think it pushed it too far, but maybe that's because we're big horror movie fans and, shocking as it is to admit, we've seen a lot worse. What it did do really well was forcibly put you in the mindset of the survivors, particularly Rick Grimes (Andrew Lincoln), with much of those scenes of Negan (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) doing his thing to Abraham (Michael Cudlitz) and Glenn (Steven Yeun) shot from Rick's point of view. By the episode's end, we were left feeling traumatized, heartbroken and sick, just as Rick was. It was powerful stuff.

Here, episode director Greg Nicotero is talking the cast and crew through a scene. Some interesting things to note: the fake body of Abraham, minus head; the crew member making sure Abe's brains are looking just right; Glenn still alive and well at this point; and the crew member holding two Lucilles.

SMOKE & MIRRORS

Preparing to shoot the scene where Rick must fetch Negan *his* axe, thrown on top of the RV surrounded by walkers. This sequence, which was broken up with flashbacks to the murders of Abraham and Glenn, was important because it gave both Rick, the character, and the audience at home time to digest what had just happened. When characters in *The Walking Dead* die they stay dead. Well, until they reanimate and are killed again, then they stay dead.

It's through images like this that you realize just how much time, effort, manpower, and technical expertise goes into making an hour-long (or in this case hour and a half-long) episode. When you are so involved in a show's storyline, it's sometimes easy to forget that there's a whole film crew and all their equipment, vehicles, rigs and so on just out of frame. We're lucky that AMC's *The Walking Dead* has such an amazing team.





◀ THE MIST 2

A lone walker receives instruction from Nicotero on what to do in an upcoming scene. Because of the smoke, it's hard to tell, but we think this is the walker who has his bulbous, pus-filled throat ripped out by Rick.

As well as directing some of the series' biggest episodes and being an executive producer, Nicotero also oversees the makeup effects and trains the actors on how to behave as walkers. And that's not including all the non-*The Walking Dead* projects he and his company are involved in. Is he the busiest man in show business? He has to be up there. The walkers this season have been particularly exceptional. Every year, they just seem to get better and better. Our favorites so far: the walker who had its faced sliced off in episode two, 'The Well,' the sand walkers from episode six's 'Swear,' and who can forget Winslow from 'New Best Friends' (more on him later)?



THIS LITTLE PIGGIE... ▲

Nicotero jokes around with first assistant director Jeff January and key second assistant director Matthew Goodwin on location for episode two, 'The Well.' After the horrors of the season premiere, 'The Well' was a welcome change of pace, adding in some much-needed light humor courtesy of Carol (Melissa McBride), Morgan (Lennie James), and King Ezekiel (Khary Payton) at The Kingdom. Even so, there was some interesting storytelling going on here between the laughs, not least the moment we discover Richard (Karl Mäkinen) is providing the Saviors with tainted pig meat. We also loved the literary allusion to the Greek myth of Hades, Persephone, and the pomegranate (look it up!).

SCENE THIS?

THE DARK DWIGHT RETURNS ▶

'The Cell' was a fascinating episode, which let us into the world of the Saviors and their lifestyle, through the eyes of Dwight (Austin Amelio). It was hard not to feel for the guy – he's clearly almost given up on life, browbeaten by Negan, although not enough to seek death himself. And yet, there were glimmers that empathy still resides within him.

The scene being shot here, where walkers fall from the overpass above, was the prelude to an important character moment. Initially, he seems like an utter tool for threatening to dig up his former friend's wife and kill all of his friends, but then Dwight puts the escapee, Gordon (Michael Scialabba), out of his misery. The dichotomy of Dwight is summed up in the way he kills him. Was the choice to shoot Gordon in the back a way to allay Negan's fears that Dwight executed one of his valuable workers without permission? Or was it because Dwight couldn't look his friend in the face?

Any sympathy for Dwight was quickly dispelled in the next episode, 'Service,' when he acts like the villain again, bullying Rosita. Or was it just for show, again



knowing Negan was nearby and keeping a close eye on him? There's more to come from Dwight, that's for sure.

BAFTA-winning British director Alrick Riley (pictured with his back to camera) helmed this episode, his second after season six's 'Twice As Far.'



▶ PAYING TRIBUTE

Without a shadow of a doubt, this scene from the fifth episode, 'Go Getters,' has to be our favorite from the first half of the season. We could watch actors Steven Ogg (Simon) and Xander Berkeley (Gregory) exchange banter all day. Their performances were pitch perfect, matched only by the exceptional dialogue by episode writer, Channing Powell, with both humor and threat weaved intricately together. More please!



WHILE THE IRON IS HOT

Although the seventh episode, 'Sing Me A Song,' was directed by Rosemary Rodriguez, Greg Nicotero was still on hand in his makeup effects maestro capacity. Here they are making a dummy run of the hot iron sequence, which saw Mark (Griffin Freeman, looking not so terrified as in the final edit) getting his comeuppance after 'cheating' with one of Negan's wives, Amber (Autumn Dial). In terms of fidelity to the comic, 'Sing Me A Song' must rank as one of the most truthful episodes to the source material to date. We always like it when the TV series interprets the comic book in its own way — it keeps the series fresh and means we're often just as surprised as viewers who have never read the comic — but there's nothing quite like seeing parts of your favorite story recreated so faithfully.



SHACK ATTACK!

We've said it before, and we'll say it again: the production values for *The Walking Dead* are stunning. It's rare that anything in the show feels out of place (or even out of character) and the coastal community of Oceanside, seen in sixth episode 'Swear' is a good case in point. Here are just two examples of how well the created 'sets' work in situ on an external location — they look like they have always been there.

'Swear' was a curiosity among the season's episodes: while it was good to find out what Tara and Heath (briefly) had been up to on their supplies excursion (they left 10 episodes before), the episode overall perhaps felt a little too isolated, like the Oceanside community itself. As suspected, they did feature again later in the story, in 'Something They Need,' but perhaps not in the way some might have expected. Will they be getting involved in the war next season?



SCENE THIS?

POOL BUDDIES ▶

Although a lot happened in the final episode before the mid-season break, 'Hearts Still Beating' did still feel a little too much like a setup for the second half of the season. It essentially put all the players in place to make the game ready to begin. Having said that, we probably cheered as loudly as anyone when Rick and the gang turned up at the Hilltop to reunite with Maggie (Lauren Cohan), Daryl (Norman Reedus), and Jesus (Tom Payne). We don't mind admitting that there was a tear in our eye during Rick and Daryl's bromantic hug.

What we like about this photo is that on screen Rick and Negan are fierce enemies — the war is real, people! — but behind the scenes, there's clearly a lot of humor and mutual respect between Lincoln and Morgan, even when standing in a pool of Spencer Monroe's (Austin Nichols) blood.



GIRL POWER!

Now this looks like a group of people we'd like to hang out with. From left to right: Katelyn Nacon (Enid), Sonequa Martin-Green (Sasha), Denise Huth (co-executive producer), Danai Gurira (Michonne), and Lauren Cohan (Maggie) look as happy as we were when the gang was reunited at Hilltop for the end of 'Hearts Still Beating'.



▲ WATER WE GONNA DO?

Hanging out up to your waist in a cool lake for hours is probably not the worst thing that could happen considering the blazing heat of Atlanta, but we expect there were a few wrinkly fingers and toes at the end of shooting this aquatic sequence for 'Hearts Still Beating.' The interesting part is working out which walker is an actor and which are props – that's a lot of floating bodies.



◀ HOLE IN MY SHOE

We love this photo of Andrew Lincoln emptying his boots of water after shooting a scene in the lake for 'Hearts Still Beating.' We're just waiting for a fish to fall out of it. What it does give you an idea about is the 'glamor' of making a television show (or movie, for that matter).

While it is very much an ensemble show, Rick is still the lead character and the gel that holds the series together, and we think Lincoln has been thoroughly on point this whole season. And, yes, we do think he deserves at least a nod for an Emmy.

SCENE THIS?



▼ TONGUE AND CHEEK

As mid-season premieres go, 'Rock In The Road' was pretty exciting and featured one of the biggest mass slaughters of walkers yet, when Rick and Michonne mowed down what seemed like hundreds of zombies on the freeway. Picking up where the first half of the season left off, this episode started to lay the foundations for the three-way community alliance that will fight the Savivors next season, with Rick visiting both Hilltop and The Kingdom.

We had to include this pic of Alanna Masterson (Tara), Christian Serratos (Rosita), and friend just because it made us laugh so much. We're not sure we completely bought Rosita's thirst for revenge during the second half of the season, but we were glad to see the character given something to do beyond killing the odd walker. Would Sasha have died if it wasn't for Rosita? We think the answer's 'probably' — Sasha wasn't as mad with anger as Rosita, she knew what she was doing and chose to make that one-way trip.



▼ KINGDOM HEARTS

Now this is a crew if ever we saw one; photo taken on 'New Best Friends.' Pretty much like every other fan, we love Jerry (Cooper Andrews). We thought Karl Makinen was also excellent as Richard, whose plot to involve The Kingdom in a war with the Savivors initially failed but ultimately worked thanks to Morgan (Lennie James) taking his life (in a quite shocking turn of events). Making up the rest of these Kingdom knights are Kerry Cahill as Dianne and Carlos Navarro as Alvaro. We expect to see them in fierce fighting action next season. Deuces!

STABBY McSTABFACE ▶

This scene in 'Something They Need' between Gregory (Xander Berkeley) and Maggie (Lauren Cohan) was one of the highlights of last season. Funny, sad and narratively important. You learnt everything you needed to know about both characters in this relatively short scene. Gregory is a sniveling coward, who really isn't fit to lead. While Maggie is a born leader and will play a vital role in the war — as long as Gregory doesn't knife her in the back first!



THE WALKING PORCUPINE

Probably our favorite walker of season seven was the short-lived Winslow, here pictured trying on episode director Jeffrey January's hat. 'New Best Friends' was an interesting episode, with the Scavengers, led by Jadis (Pollyanna McIntosh), splitting fan opinion. While it's hard to believe that people would lose the ability to "properly English speak like people do normal" in such a short space of time — it wasn't that long ago when society fell — their all-round weirdness also added something a little different to the show. They do feel a little bit like a certain large aggressive group currently causing havoc in the comics, don't they?



THAT'S NEAT — REALLY LOVE THOSE TIGER FEET

That's Shiva that is. No, honestly, it is. Or rather it's stuntman Scott Hunter, dressed in head-to-toe Lycra playing the role of Ezekiel's amazing tiger before computer wizardry replaces him for the final edit in 'The First Day Of The Rest Of Your Life.' Who else cheered when Shiva came roaring (literally) into shot to take out those Savivors? We hope we see a lot more Shiva next season, but we also know what happens to her in the comic. Boo!



A FECK OF PICKLED PICKLES

OK, so what's the deal with some over-zealous 'fans' sending actor Josh McDermitt hate messages via his social media? That's just wrong, people. Josh is one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet, as those fans who have done just that at various signings will tell you. He's also gloriously funny, not just in character but also in real life. Do we believe Eugene has really switched sides just for a large jar of pickles and a soft toy? No, not for an instant. He's just waiting for Rick to come rescue him.

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK!

Well, we had to finish on this lovely pic of Michael Cudlitz (Abraham) and Sonequa Martin-Green (Sasha) hugging while shooting their flashback sequence in 'The First Day Of The Rest Of Your Life.' Ah, we're really going to miss them... ◆





ALL ABOARD!

THE WALKER STALKER CRUISE 2017 REVIEW

Take 10 stars of AMC's *The Walking Dead* and lock them on a boat with more than 2,000 rabid fans for four days and you either have a recipe for a nautical disaster or the best convention/vacation ever. *TWDM's* editor boards the 2017 Walker Stalker Cruise to find the answer.

WORDS & INTERVIEWS: Toby Weidmann



Day One (Friday, February 3)

It is with some trepidation that I step upon the first of a long series of gangplanks leading up to the huge cruise liner known as the Norwegian Pearl, which will be my home for the next few days. Ever since being invited to join the Skybound team on their high seas adventure, also known as the Walker Stalker Cruise, I have been battling my nerves. Not because of any fear of spending time with some of the cast and crew of AMC's *The Walking Dead* – I've been doing this entertainment journalism gig long enough not to become star-struck around, well, stars. Nor am I apprehensive of meeting the fans in a large social setting – these are my people, after all. And I was looking forward to catching up with the Skybound team in person again.

No, the real source of my concern – which genuinely had me dithering about accepting the invitation – is the knowledge that in just a few hours we will be setting sail for four days and three nights on this 965-foot long seafaring behemoth. I should point out that I am a self-confessed landlubber: I was born in a landlocked small town and, although I have relocated several times, I've never been drawn to the hearty, fresh bluster of seaside living.

I don't know where this fear of the ocean comes from; perhaps from watching such movies as *The Poseidon Adventure*, *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea* and *Jaws* at a young age. The upshot is that the idea of spending four days trapped on a steel boat out in the open sea has me all a jitter.

It doesn't help that the weather is barmy. It's early February and, where I come from, it should be wet, cold, and dreary. Instead, there's a blazing dry heat in Miami and I'm dripping sweat like a champion horse after a marathon race. I'm putting on a brave face, but I know I'm not going to enjoy myself. Even the enthusiastic high-five from a member of the Sixthman team (the company that's arranged this event/trip) who welcomes me aboard the Pearl can't allay my fears. I grit my teeth and head inside.

Then came the first of many surprises. Dropping off my suitcase in my stateroom (what they call a room on the ship) located on the ninth floor of the 13-deck ship, I am really impressed by what I find: it's spotless and larger than I was expecting, with a comfy double bed and a view from a balcony. The bathroom is a little tight – I could imagine it being a squeeze for two people – but all in all, very impressive. Still, I'm not here to sit in my room all day...

A quick cocktail stop at the top deck bar, and then it's off to my safety briefing (mandatory for all cruises), which lasts less than an hour. With the necessities out of the way, it was time to explore the ship, which, at least initially, is a maze of corridors, bars, restaurants and large empty rooms (that didn't stay unoccupied for very long).

Emboldened by some tasty food served in the main buffet restaurant (which offered an array of meals, all free for the duration of the voyage) as well as a few more cocktails served up top (not free, but not outrageously expensive), I hardly notice when the liner sets sail. Perhaps cruise holidays aren't so bad after all...

And so on to the real reason why myself and around 2,500 other fans are really here: 10 guests from AMC's *The Walking Dead* TV series are also aboard, namely Norman Reedus (Daryl), Jeffrey Dean Morgan (Negan), Chandler Riggs (Carl), Katelyn Nacon (Enid), Ross Marquand (Aaron), Alanna Masterson (Tara), Tom Payne (Jesus), Michael Cudlitz (Abraham), Micheal Traynor (Nicholas), and executive producer Greg Nicotero. The first autograph sessions kick off at 5pm and run through to 9pm



THIS PAGE, TOP: The exclusive merch on sale was all produced by Skybound. **MIDDLE:** Greg Nicotero talks to *Daily Dead*'s Jonathan James in one of the many panels with the guests. **ABOVE:** Skybound's Brian Huntington prepares to test the fans with his fiendish quiz. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** A selection of images from the first night's Q&A panel with Greg Nicotero, Norman Reedus, and Jeffrey Dean Morgan, hosted by Walker Stalker's James Frazier.

MORE THAN JSS

TWDM talks with KATELYN NACON

How do you feel Enid's character developed last season?

"I definitely feel that we saw Enid open up a lot more. We got to see another side to her that's very different from what we'd seen before. That she's more loving, caring



and connected to people, especially someone like Maggie. I was very happy for Enid because we're starting to see her grow.

She was strong before, but I think the new bonds that we saw her make over the course of the season were great."



(located in those previously empty rooms), giving fans plenty of time to meet, chat, take a selfie, and naturally purchase their precious autographs. I pop in for a look-see, and although the queues are long, the atmosphere is relaxed and everyone seems to be having a good time, making new friends as they queue.

But I'm not here to chase autographs. I'm here to report on what the Walker Stalker Cruise is all about. There are a whole host of events happening across the ship, not including all its usual facilities, ie a health spa, Jacuzzis, a cinema, a casino, restaurants and bars, and even a bowling alley (yeah, I'm not quite sure how that last one works either). I head to deck six to check out Skybound's *The Walking Dead* Trivia Quiz, presented by the company's online editorial director, Brian Huntington. Deciding not to enter myself (fearful that I would either ace it, leading to cries of nepotism, or fail dramatically, causing ridicule), I settle at the bar. But I couldn't help myself and occasionally whisper answers to a nearby team, a friendly duo, Scott and his nephew Daniel, who I would run into several times over the course of the trip.



WHISKEY GALORE!

TWDM talks with MICHAEL CUDLITZ

What do you think about the Cruise?

"It's been fantastic. I turned it down last year because I get sea-sick. But I decided to come this year, wearing a patch and bands, and I haven't been sick the entire time. The fans have honestly been fantastic. They've been very respectful. They like to spend time with us, but at the same time they know when to back off and give us some free time."



relationship with Rick, he's much more of a confidante. Because the show has been using Daryl for that – which I think is an awesome way to do it – any other characters who come in and also do that tend to come and go. They don't have that same long-term relationship with Rick as they do in the comic.

"The show has a different structure to the comic. It allows the show to emulate the comic but go through these characters and circulate these characters. Let's face it, it's a show about survival and there are only so many ways to tell the story of people getting into peril and then being rescued *unless* you change up the cast. It allows you to see how different people will react to those situations. I think it's a very eloquent way to evolve the story. It's an evolution because this character will handle it differently from that one."

How was the Whiskey Tasting?

"My buddy is an ambassador for Hudson Whiskey. He came on and helped me out with it. He gave a full history, from Canada to Ireland to Scotland and back to Kentucky. We sampled all of them. It was great, and by the end of it everyone was just lit."

What are your thoughts about Abraham's death?

"I assumed it was coming because I'd been around longer than in the comic and I knew [showrunner] Scott Gimple was sticking a little more strictly to the comic. In the comic, Abraham has a much closer

It's good for the show, because it allows the fans to fall in love with characters and then suffer their loss and then they meet new characters and fall in love with them. It's very satisfying as a viewer."

More time to wander – including a quick stop in the merch store to check out the exclusive wares produced by Skybound – before heading to the top deck for the main photocall with all the guests. Following this is an hour-long panel with Reedus, Morgan, and Nicotero, in which they cover all manner of topics, including the events of season seven. Stopping only briefly in the casino after the panel, where I manage to lose 50 bucks in less time than I care to mention, I decide to call it a night and head back to my room for some much-needed snoozing.

Day Two (Saturday, February 4)

Today is going to be the busiest day. I ready myself (as I did every day) by hitting the Garden Café for a hearty buffet breakfast and numerous cups of caffeine. By the time I am properly cognizant, events have already been and gone elsewhere on the ship, including the Thriller Dance Class.

For most guests, the big draw today is the professional photo sessions with the cast, which continue for most of the day

(10.30am-6.30pm), but I find myself drawn instead to the various hour-long panels that happen throughout the day. Tom Payne kicks off the Q&A sessions held on the pool deck, before Greg Nicotero takes over, talking to *Daily Dead*'s editor-in-chief, Jonathan James. From there, I rush over to the Stardust Theater six decks down, to catch Alanna Masterson in conversation with convention founder James Frazier for a Walker Stalker podcast, before then traipsing back to deck 13 for the second half of Skybound's fiendish quiz. The latter clashes with a Whiskey Tasting event with Michael Cudlitz and, elsewhere, Katelyn Nacon singing some of her own songs. There's simply too much to see and do...

There is barely enough time to catch my breath before Masterson and Frazier appear together again on the pool deck to judge the much-touted Belly Flop competition. I watch in awe as men, women and children throw themselves with abandon into the pool (suitably dyed red), rising from the water with smiles on their faces and large red marks across their stomachs.

A quick bite to eat and again I hit the pool deck for the first of two evenings of Cosplay Contests. Tonight, it's all about the walkers, and who better to judge than monster makeup maestro Greg Nicotero? I marvel at the array of zombies (and other undead creatures) who go up on stage – the effort some fans go to is really impressive and inspiring. But there's little time to dally, because Michael Traynor is leading a Pub Crawl, hitting several bars across the ship with a speciality cocktail for all at each. I crash the crawl halfway through (the benefit of having a media pass) and inevitably follow the assembled guests as they pile into their final private destination,



PERSONAL TRAYNOR

TWDM talks with MICHAEL TRAYNOR

What do you think about the Cruise?

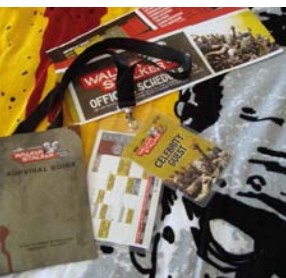
"It's a kinda crazy idea, but from a fan perspective they have the opportunity for a more genuine interaction with the actors, even outside of the more traditional signing and photo opportunity situations. We're all having the same experience and everyone is so relaxed."



"Having played such a despicable coward on the show, I think everyone is surprised that I tend to lean towards the funny side. Some of it was a bit risqué, but that's just the way I think and talk."

Your speed of thought is amazing. You really remind us of Robin Williams.

"That's very kind. He's someone I've always admired. I look at him and think, 'Oh, I could never do that,' but most humans can't. I guess there's a similarity in the sense that the engine just kicks on. I can feel it, the engine's running, you know? It is a fun experience for me too. You just have to hop on the highway."



a lounge bar called Bliss. The bar is appropriately named because that's the emotion the pub crawlers feel when they discover that their final drink is to be served by Tom Payne, who is a whirlwind behind the bar as he dishes out the cocktails.

Dinner in one of the ship's speciality restaurants (a steakhouse called Cagney's) with the Skybound team allows me some brief respite – I've been on my feet pretty much all day and the ol' knees and ankles are beginning to suffer – but the night's not over. Something filthy awaits me at 10.30pm: Dirty Bingo with Traynor and Ross Marquand. In all honesty, I don't remember too much about the hour that followed thanks to a few too many alcoholic beverages – but I do remember laughing. A lot. As I found out on the Pub Crawl, Traynor is a force of nature – packed with infectious energy and with a mind as sharp as a



FAR LEFT: The free Walker Stalker towel and Cruise ephemeris. **LEFT:** Nicotero quizzes one of the walker Cosplay Contest entrants. **BELOW LEFT:** Belly Flop competition time with Frazier and Alanna Masterson as judges. **BELOW:** Never give Michael Traynor a bullhorn, especially not on a Pub Crawl.





TOP LEFT: Fellow travellers Scott (left) and nephew Daniel meet Jesus. **TOP RIGHT, MIDDLE LEFT & LEFT:** The pub crawlers having a good time with Michael Traynor and Tom Payne. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Nicotero joins the band for some axe action. **BELOW:** The beautiful island of Great Stirrup Cay, with the Norwegian Pearl anchored in the background.

With my cheeks aching from laughing, I head back out onto the top deck to see the band, Saved By The Band, play some live music. I'd heard a rumor that they may be joined on stage by some special guests, and neither the crowd nor I are left disappointed. Greg Nicotero is the first to appear, playing guitar; then Tom Payne comes on stage to rock out a tune; followed by Ross Marquand and Michael Traynor; before all team up with the band for the finale. It was quite something and probably one of the highlights of the whole trip.



CAUGHT IN THE ROSS FIRE

TWDM talks with ROSS MARQUAND

This is your second time on the Cruise. How does it compare?

"It's been amazing. The organization of the whole thing has been so streamlined from last year. I've had so much fun these past few days... It's been great and the fans have been wonderful. I'd do it again, 100 percent."



What's been your highlight of the trip?

"Michael Traynor and I did a Dirty Bingo. I don't think I've ever had so much fun at an event. My cheeks were hurting from laughing so much. I was genuinely surprised how well that worked. Michael's brain is brilliant. I love the way his mind connects everything."

Day Three (Sunday, February 5)

Urgh! Hangover time – the things I do for this magazine...

OK, so I'm guessing there's not much sympathy in the room, and there will be even less when I mention that most of today is spent on the private island of Great Stirrup Cay in the Bahamas. I won't dilly-dally too much about this (really, you don't care about its beautiful white sands and warm aquamarine shallows, do you?), but here's a quick recap: it was hot and I burned, despite my factor 50; I went snorkelling and saw some amazing fish, turtles and coral (coral, not Carl!); I used the ace Walker Stalker towel that



THIS PAGE, TOP: That's no way to treat Hershel's head, ladies!
MIDDLE LEFT: The top deck stage, hosting Tom Payne's panel.
MIDDLE RIGHT: Carl cosplayer Tia with her father, Wayne. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Rick lookalike Trent, worthy winner of the Survivor Cosplay Contest. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Chandler Riggs and Katelyn Nacon give their verdict on the cosplayers. **OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** DJ Carl in da house for Headphone Disco. **BOTTOM:** Michael Traynor entertains the crowds gathered for some Dirty Bingo.

had been left in my room the night before (a great keepsake); I spent a lovely few hours chatting with some fellow Walker Stalker travellers at a bar, including a journalist called Deb, from St Louis; I drank a lot of water – did I mention it was hot?

Right, back on the ship and there's still plenty left to do, not least catch some of Super Bowl LI (a thrilling game for the neutral, nerve-wracking as hell for Pats and Falcons fans). Elsewhere, the autograph sessions have started again, so I head down to deck six to pester the actors for an interview in-between signings, some of which you can read here (see box outs).

I also get the chance to meet up with WSC's James Frazier again. I ask him why he thinks the Cruise, now in its second year, has been such a success: "The whole experience has been great. The attendees have been great. The actors love it, because it's almost like a working vacation for them. The Cruise just has a very relaxed feel. At our other events, we have this 10am to 5pm period where you have to fit everything in. But here the fans have a whole day to do things, going on into the evening, so nothing feels rushed. I've loved it..."

"The best part about these weekends is that the fans get to see the guests in a different environment. I give a lot of credit to Sixthman for coming up with some unique ways for fans to see those things... They produce a lot of these concert style events on cruises, so they were very equipped to handle an event like ours. Sixthman has done a fabulous job, with Skybound's help and our team's help. I'm really proud of it."

I ask him whether he feels the experience could be improved in any way. "There's always room for improvement," he notes. "We send out surveys, as we do after every convention, to get fan



feedback. I think that's one of the reasons why Walker Stalker Con has continued to grow, because we stay connected to the fans. We didn't start out as a business, we started as fans wanting to put on a fan event... We try to stay humble and listen to everybody and make everyone have a good experience, from the attendees to the actors to the managers to all the staff, security and contractors. We want that family feel when they come to one of our events."

Enough of the chit-chat. I head back out onto the top deck to catch the tail end of Chandler Riggs and Katelyn Nacon's panel, which leads in to their judging of the second Cosplay Contest, this time with the theme of survivors. If anything, there's more people taking part in this contest than the walker-themed one the night before. I run into young Tia, dressed in full Carl Grimes outfit,

IT'S LIFE JAMES, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

TWDM talks to JAMES FRAZIER, founder of Walker Stalker Con

How do you think the Cruise has gone this year?

"Well, I missed last year, which was very disappointing. So, I've been looking forward to this all year because the feedback from everyone was all so positive. It's been more than I ever expected. I love our land-based conventions, but this just has a completely different atmosphere, with everyone being self-contained on the ship and the endless things to do. You can find something to do almost any hour through day and night."

You really look after people with disabilities.

"That's important to me. My wife was in a wheelchair for a year and a half and doing anything with



her was difficult, even when things were supposed to be wheelchair-friendly... No matter what the disability is we try to accommodate that person and give them the same experience as everyone else. It's not always possible, but we try our best."

What's been your highlight?

"Dirty Bingo. Michael [Traynor] and Ross [Marquand] were just on top of their game. It was the funniest and probably the filthiest thing we've ever done, but it was awesome. Anyone who was in that room will never forget it. They might not remember every single detail but they will remember that they laughed hard for a solid hour and a half. They really got a taste of how talented they both are."



with her father, Wayne. Hailing from Alabama, they tell me how much they have enjoyed the Cruise – indeed, Tia is flushed with excitement having just stepped off stage with Riggs, who had praised her costume. I also bump into a Rick lookalike, Trent, who is so much the spitting image of actor Andrew Lincoln that I'm forced to double-take. I'm not surprised he's selected as the overall winner.

After the contest, it's time for the final panel with Cudlitz, Masterson, Marquand, and Traynor. With these four firebrands on stage, there was always bound to be some comedic fireworks sparking and the quartet did not disappoint.

With all of the official events concluded, I decide to hit up the Headphone Disco for one final blow-out. It's an interesting concept: guests wear headphones (natch!) tuned into one of two



DJ'd channels, meaning half the room is dancing to one song and the rest are bopping along to another. I didn't witness it myself, but I understand Riggs turned up one night to DJ (confirmed by the photo above). I decide enough is enough around the 1.30am mark and head back to my room. I leave Michael Traynor to it – seriously, where does this guy find the energy?

Day Four (Monday, February 6)

Incredibly, I wake to find the ship has already docked in Miami. One last buffet breakfast and quick luggage pack later and I'm all set to disembark, my Walker Stalker Cruise experience finally at an end.

So, what were my overall thoughts, given that I wasn't keen beforehand? I'm not an autograph hunter or in need of celeb photos, which I realize is one of the big draws for most attendees, but judging purely on the other events that set the cruise apart from other land-based cons I think the Cruise is tremendous and I would love to do it again. There is a wide variety of activities to either take part in or just simply watch and enjoy, with the Pub Crawl, Whiskey Tasting, Dirty Bingo and such really offering fans a chance to get to know the actors behind the characters a little better.

The food is pretty good overall, the drinks prices are not exorbitant, and my room was excellently maintained by the crew. The added bonus of a vacation to the Bahamas, even for just a day, is the icing on top of a very well-produced and delicious cake.

My one complaint (or rather warning for future passengers) is not to bother with paying for wi-fi in your room – it really was a waste of money. I found I was only able to access it in the very early hours and even then the connection was very poor.

It's also worth mentioning the cost here. There's no doubt that this is an expensive 'golden' ticket – with prices ranging from around the \$1,000 mark for a simple room to \$6,000 for a top end penthouse – but then the flipside is that the Cruise really is an experience like no other.

And so finally, will the Walker Stalker Cruise be sailing the high seas again in 2018? The answer is a resounding 'yes!' The dates have already been announced, with the boat sailing from New Orleans to Cozumel in Mexico on January 26-30, with guests already including Robert Kirkman, Greg Nicotero, Norman Reedus, Lauren Cohan, Ross Marquand, Austin Amelio, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Alanna Masterson, and Irone Singleton (subject to availability), with perhaps more likely to sign up nearer the time. If you can afford it, I really can't recommend the Cruise enough. •

Book your tickets for Walker Stalker Cruise 2018 here:
www.walkerstalkercon.com



WALKING THE WALK

KATE O'SHAUGHNESSY

TV series reaction videos have become quite the rage over the past 12 months or so, and one of *TWDM*'s favorite reactors for AMC's *The Walking Dead* and AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead* is a young woman called Kate O'Shaughnessy. If you have seen any of Skybound's episode reaction compilation videos on YouTube there's no way you could miss Kate. Her hair is often as colorful as her language and her expressive reactions come across as nothing but sincere; all spoken in that soft Irish brogue – we all love the Irish accent, right?

A chance encounter with Kate at Walker Stalker Con: London led to the fruition of an idea we've been toying with for a while: a new regular feature written by a YouTube reactor offering their thoughts on *The Walking Dead*. You can read Kate's debut column on page 68, but for those who don't know too much about her, *TWDM* decided to give her our 'Celebrity Fan' treatment.

INTERVIEW: Toby Weidmann

WHAT'S THE FIRST GEEKY THING YOU BECAME OBSESSED WITH AS A CHILD?

That's easy, *Pokémon*. I was about eight years old when I became proper obsessed with it. I had a *Pokémon* bedspread, *Pokémon* curtains, a *Pokémon* watch. I had a Pikachu that I carried with me everywhere. Full-blown obsessed for years. I think I've always been attracted to bright colors and I just loved the show.



WERE YOU EVER INTO COMIC BOOKS?

I've dabbled in them. My brother has long boxes full of them. I have a feeling I probably will get more into them now, because I love reading and I love art. I really appreciate the art aspect of comics and all the work that goes into creating them.

HOW DID YOU GET HOOKED ON THE WALKING DEAD?

It's a funny story... I got my love of horror from my dad and he got his love of horror from his granddad, so horror has always been popular in my family. But the only genre I would not go near is zombies. I had a bad experience with a zombie movie when I was younger, *I Am Legend*. Oh, it was a bad idea watching that. It freaked me out so much. [A brief interlude while TWDM and Kate discuss whether this film features zombies or vampires. We conclude that they are vampires that act like zombies – ed.]

Anyway, my dad, for weeks, tried to get me to watch *The Walking Dead*, and I was like, "No, definitely not. I don't like zombies!" But he eventually wore me down and about the middle of season one I knew I was going to be obsessed with it. I have that sort of personality. I knew it was going to be my thing. I think season five was airing at the time, so I was late to the party, but I'm here nonetheless.

CLEARLY, YOU'RE A BIG FAN OF HORROR.

I've always loved gore. It's never grossed me out. I've gone through a lot of the older stuff, the classics, it's like a right of passage when you're a horror fan, but I personally love the more psychological horrors,

"I GOT MY LOVE OF HORROR FROM MY DAD AND HE GOT HIS LOVE OF HORROR FROM HIS GRANDDAD, SO HORROR HAS ALWAYS BEEN POPULAR IN MY FAMILY."

love? So, there's that aspect, but then there's the flipside with the gore and the horror. I think it can appeal to everybody.

AS YOU MENTIONED THE SUBJECT, TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR TATTOOS. YOU HAVE QUITE A FEW WALKING DEAD INSPIRED ONES.

I've stopped counting them now. I lost count around 30. I also have band tattoos, family tattoos, logos. Right now, I'm working on a *Walking Dead* three-quarter sleeve. I have all different things from the show – I have Rick's sheriff badge,

the green balloons Glenn set off, JSS, a Cherokee rose. Most recently, I had a small sketch that Charlie Adlard did for me at Walker Stalker turned into one.

WE KNOW YOU HAVE READ THE COMIC BOOK UP TO A POINT. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO STOP?

The only reason I stopped was when I was reading them and watching the show I could sort of piece together what was going to happen. I wanted to be completely in the dark watching the series and that's the only reason I halted reading them.



the ones that really make you think. But if horror is stamped on it, I'll watch it.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE WALKING DEAD TO SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER SEEN OR READ IT?

I did this recently. My boss was asking me about my *Walking Dead* tattoos and why I loved the show so much. I know it's cliché to say, but it's not about the zombies, it's about the people, it's about their stories and what they do to survive. It does make you think about what you would do if you were in that situation. How far would you go to protect the people you

"I LOVE DARYL'S STORY AND HOW FAR HE HAS COME AS A CHARACTER... I LOVED SEEING HIM GO FROM AN OUTSIDER TO PROPERLY BEING PART OF THE FAMILY."

I think I will pick them up again and catch up to where we are in the show now, but I don't want any inkling about what will happen. I like to be completely in the dark about everything and try to piece together what may happen myself, rather than have something to go on.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE STORY ARC FROM THE SHOW?

I love Daryl's story and how far he has come as a character. Mid season three I really started to take notice of him, because he went against the grain of everything he should have been and everything he



WALKING THE WALK

KATE O'SHAUGHNESSY

should be doing. And then with Merle's death, I could relate with Daryl because I have a brother and could picture myself in his situation. I loved seeing him go from an outsider to properly being part of the family who would do anything for them. He really found himself through the apocalypse. The apocalypse can make or break you and for Daryl I think it really made him.

DO YOU HAVE ANY RITUALS TO WATCHING *THE WALKING DEAD*?

I just make sure the camera is charged and recording. The number of times I've sat down just to do regular videos and found it off is ridiculous.

After I do the reactions, I usually re-watch the episodes with my mother. I love seeing how she reacts to it, because I know what's going to happen and she doesn't. So, I guess that's my ritual.

HOW DID THE WHOLE YOUTUBE CHANNEL HAPPEN?

I had watched a few discussion videos on *The*

"WHEN *THE WALKING DEAD* BURST ONTO THE SCREEN IT WAS SO UNLIKE ANYTHING THAT ANYONE HAD SEEN BEFORE AND IT WAS WHAT TV WAS MISSING, AND STILL IS."

Walking Dead. I've never been as passionate about anything as much as *The Walking Dead* and I felt if I didn't share my thoughts I'd blow up. There's only so much you can say

in a tweet. I am quite talkative and I do have a lot to say, so I thought videos, and reactions in particular, might be something people would be interested in. I'm so happy I decided to do it because of the amount of people I've talked to and met through it. It is one of the best things I've ever done.

I'm quite an introverted person and it's quite an

extrovert thing to do. But when you're filming it's just you and the camera, so you don't really feel like you're doing anything bold or out there. I just do it as if I'm talking to a friend. If I was to sit back and think people are going to see this, the nerves would kick in big time.

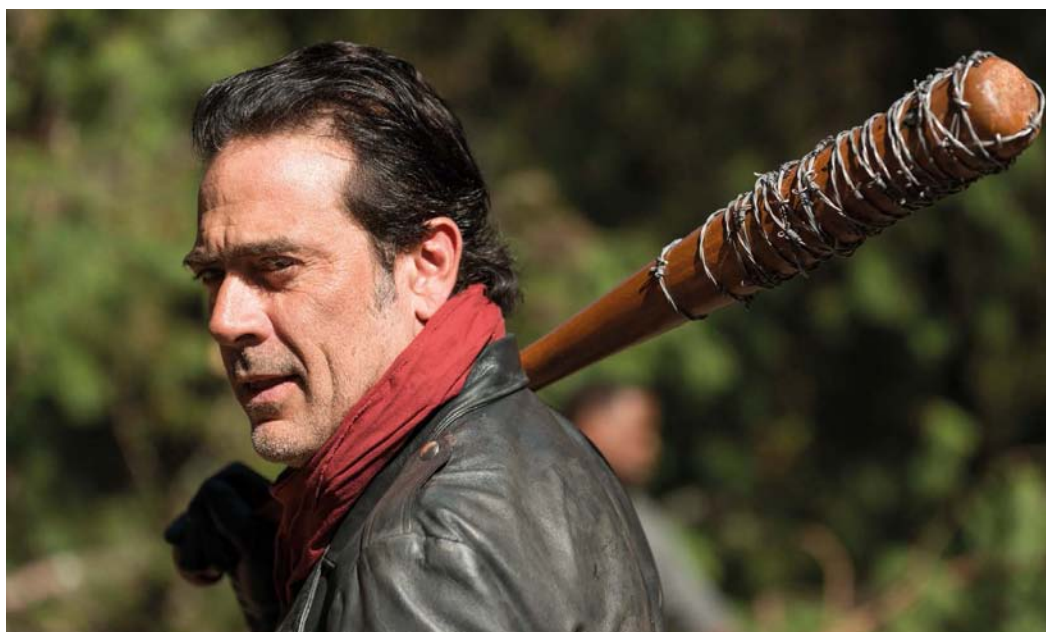
WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON *THE WALKING DEAD* OVERALL?

I think when it burst onto the screen it was so unlike anything that anyone had seen before and it was what TV was missing, and still is – I feel like it still fills that gap. I don't think there's been a show like it before and I don't think there ever will be again. I've never seen such a passionate and dedicated fandom – and I've been in a lot of fandoms.

WHAT'S THE MAIN THING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN IN SEASON EIGHT?

I'd like to see the tables turned on Negan. I'd love to see somebody put the fear of god into him, because he likes to think he's untouchable. I'd love someone to freak him out completely. I don't see this season being the end of Negan. He's too larger than life to just be over and done with in two and a bit seasons.

I'd also love to see more Ezekiel and The Kingdom, because they were my favorite aspects of last season. I've never seen a character like him, he's so theatrical and over-the-top. And Ezekiel has a pet tiger. And Ezekiel seems like he has a good heart.



WHAT'S BEEN YOUR FAVORITE 'GEEK OUT' MOMENT?

There's been a few. I went to Walker Stalker London this year and the previous year and I met a lot of the cast members. Standing in a room with the cast of your favorite show is the most surreal experience I've ever had. I pretty much spent those weekends in a constant state of geeking out, while outwardly trying to appear calm and collected.



It was incredible to meet the actors and see them as people and not just as their characters.



"MAKE VIDEOS ON WHAT YOU LOVE, BECAUSE IF YOU LOVE SOMETHING IT WILL SHINE THROUGH."

KATE O'SHAUGHNESSY FACT FILE

NAME: Kate O'Shaughnessy

THE WALKING DEAD CONNECTION:

YouTuber, reactor

HOME: Limerick, Ireland

BIOGRAPHY: Kate is a relatively new YouTube reactor to *The Walking Dead*, having posted her first video just over a year ago, covering episodes from the back end of season six. Her channel actually dates back further – be warned, there are quite a few One Direction in concert videos – and she has now almost 20,000 dedicated followers. She records her videos in her own bedroom, which eagle-eyed viewers will note features a whole host of *The Walking Dead* merch (as well as a pet hamster). Her reaction to the season seven finale, which garnered more than 100,000 views, was featured on *Talking Dead*. She is very active with her followers, replying to comments and tweets about the show. She describes herself as talkative but quite introverted: "I love people and love talking to people, but initiating conversations with people catches me out. I think that's why YouTube has helped so much, because I come across as quite extrovert, but I am really quite shy in myself."

HIDDEN TALENT: "Hmm, if I told you it wouldn't be so hidden anymore. [Laughs] I'm double-jointed. I can bend my thumb back so it touches my arm and I'm double-jointed in my elbows so I can swivel my arms around, which completely freaks people out. I'm also pretty good at word searches and crosswords."

YOUTUBE CHANNEL:

Katie O'Shaughnessy

TWITTER: @katieshox



Shockingly, a few of them recognized me from my videos, which was an incredible experience. How do you prepare for something like that? Your mind goes into overdrive and you're trying to remain calm while a psychotic smile spreads across your face. It still makes my knees shake thinking about it.

FINALLY, ANY ADVICE FOR SOMEONE WANTING TO BECOME A YOUTUBER?

I still don't really consider myself a YouTuber at this stage, but if I was to offer some advice it would be to make videos on what you love, because if you love something it will shine through. You won't feel nervous or self-conscious talking about a subject that you know – it's as easy as breathing. And you'll make a bunch of friends as well – they are clicking on your video because they are as interested in it as you are. •

Turn over the page to read Kate's first column for *TWDM*



ARROW ON THE DOORPOST

In her first column for a new regular section for *TWDM*, YouTuber KATE O'SHAUGHNESSY reviews the last season and looks ahead to season eight...

It was a closing episode as explosive as season seven's opener, and 'The First Day Of The Rest Of Your Life' left me feeling a range of emotions: sorrow for poor Sasha; excitement for Maggie, having stepped into a leadership role; and with the union of Alexandria, Hilltop and The Kingdom, a sense of hope for the future.

However, with the good comes the bad; we wouldn't need hope for the future if Negan wasn't plotting the downfall of our favorite characters, such is the incredibly terrifying villain that he is. So, what does this all mean for season eight?

Eager to rid himself of his that-guy-who-makes-your-kid-pasta reputation, Negan's attempt at killing Carl was a pretty clear statement that he's intent on being taken more seriously. After Rick assures him that he is still planning his demise, as well as witnessing the beauty that is Shiva in full attack mode *and* discovering Maggie is still alive, I reckon Negan will retreat for a while, taking time to process everything and conjure up diabolical schemes that will have fans like myself screaming at the TV as we watch them unfold.

One thing that really struck me about the second half of the season was how certain characters grabbed my attention, with their storylines nicely set up for the coming season. Specifically, Carol, Eugene, and Maggie.

Now that Carol has overcome her internal moral battle (as has Morgan) and returned to the fold, I'm interested to see if she will remain at The Kingdom and further explore her new connection with King Ezekiel. I can certainly see the similarities between the two, and I feel they complement each other nicely, regardless of whether that's a platonic or romantic relationship.



PHOTOS: Kate O'Shaughnessy; Gene Page/AMC



A ninja called Jesus, and a fierce lady who mows down cars with a tractor make one hell of a duo.

Another character arc I'm eager to witness is Eugene's. After the whole "I'm Negan" fiasco, on the face of it, it appears as though he's switched sides. But then again, he did slip Sasha that fatal pill in an attempt to help her. So where does his loyalty truly lie? Does he have a brilliant masterplan, or has he really turned on the friends who became his 'family' over the past few seasons?

On the flip side, although no longer stationed in Alexandria, Maggie's loyalty to her group has remained steadfast. Having lost the love of her life and found her place at Hilltop as its incumbent leader, she finished the season on a high, charging in to help kick Negan out of Alexandria. She did all of this while *pregnant*. I know, right – impressive! Her newfound friendship with Jesus was something I particularly loved. A ninja called Jesus and a fierce lady who mows down



cars with a tractor make one hell of a duo in my opinion.

Indeed, I think season eight will be the season for duos, with the likes of Michonne and Rick, Ezekiel and Shiva, Morgan and Carol, and possibly Daryl and Dwight. The rise and fall and rise again of Dwight was particularly interesting to watch. Admittedly, I was eager for his downfall from the moment he shot Daryl (season six's 'East'). After watching his character blossom, however, it's clear to me that he simply found himself stuck in a position from

Despite their fractious encounters, Daryl and Dwight's characters are so alike that I feel it's only a matter of time before the two join forces.

which he could not escape. A good man trapped in a bad situation. With Sherry gone, he had nothing tying him to the Sanctuary anymore, which

led to his conversion to Rick's side. Despite their fractious encounters, Daryl and Dwight's characters are so alike, sharing many common traits, that I feel it's only a matter of time before the two join forces and add to the show's list of dynamic duos.

If there's one thing this series has proven repeatedly it's that you can't survive alone; you need others to help you along the way – although you can't trust everyone (Jadis, I'm looking at you!). With war on the horizon and tensions at an all-time high, I hope every viewer was as delighted as me with the very real sense of community encapsulated in the closing scene of season seven. I simply cannot wait to watch Rick and co take Negan to pee-pee pants city, *real soon*. •

Follow Kate on Twitter (@katieshox) and enjoy all her *The Walking Dead* videos on her YouTube channel (search: Katie O'Shaughnessy)



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THE REGULARS



The Alexandria Safe-Zone and its denizens dominate this issue's Regulars, with our in-depth analysis of the 24th trade paperback in 'Anatomy,' set in and around the community post time jump; and then we peek inside the safe haven's walls in 'Choice Cuts.' We also return to Woodbury to meet Jim – remember him? – in our 'End Trails' section, which also includes a wonderfully cute (and funny) Q&A with actor Katelyn Nacon, who is about as bubbly and lovely a person as we've ever had the pleasure of meeting. In-between there's all our usual goodness, a healthy mix of fan letters and art, reviews and previews, and our tough-as-hell quiz to tax the gray matter. Enjoy!

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ANATOMY OF A STORY

Analysis of *Volume 24: Life And Death*.

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CHOICE CUTS

Meet the Alexandrians.

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Our letters section, including fan art.

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'Death Sentence' 'The Secret Diary Of A Walker,' and a Q&A with Enid, aka actor Katelyn Nacon.



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ANATOMY OF A STORY



LIFE AND DEATH

Although there's still a long way to go before society returns to normal, the way of life of the surviving communities has at least settled down since the two-year time jump following the events of 'All Out War.' Barring a few hiccups, life has become relatively easy, with the Savivors defeated, Negan in prison, and the walkers much less of a threat. This dramatically changes in Volume 24, 'Life And Death,' as Robert Kirkman enters a new terrifying era in *The Walking Dead's* story. WORDS: Stuart Barr



In Volume 24, outward prosperity hides old threats and the shadow of a new enemy. It is also a story of troubled reunions and a violent clash of ideologies.

Its low-key opening creates an illusion of safety. Ezekiel leads a group from The Kingdom, which easily cuts through walkers en route to the coast. The process is now so habitual that they give no more thought to decapitating a walker than they would cutting vines. They join a group from Alexandria, led by Rick Grimes, who are heading to the same destination.

Ezekiel chides Rick for wasting ammunition. Rick replies that they are now stockpiling munitions and have no shortage of bullets – a marked point that will be

WE'RE STOCKPILING IT AT THIS POINT. WE'RE MAKING FAR MORE THAN WE USE.

WE ALSO WANTED TO DRAW SOME ROAMERS AWAY FROM THE COAST BEFORE WE GOT THERE.



revisited later in the story. This revelation suggests a truly post-apocalyptic society in a phase of expansion. Settlements are independent but self-sufficient through trade. A fair is even being planned in Alexandria in a few days time.

However, *The Walking Dead* is a horror story, not a pastoral farming drama. Robert Kirkman has used the two-year time jump, following the conclusion of 'All Out War,' to refresh his tale and take things in an all-new direction. But, as is usually the case with *The Walking Dead*, we can be sure that trouble lies ahead.

Happy Reunion?

Mysteriously absent from the book since the time jump, Michonne makes her return, arriving into port on a fishing boat. Having walked out on her partner, Ezekiel, as well as her friends and the community at large, her return is a tense one. She barely acknowledges Ezekiel, and on seeing 'new girl' Magna she asks Rick if Andrea has something to worry about. Rick's stern reply that he would "never do that to someone" may not have been meant as a reminder to Michonne of her dalliance with Tyreese and its consequences (in Volume 4: 'The Heart's Desire'), but it surely does.

Privately, Michonne reveals to Rick the personal reasons behind her disappearance. She fled because of overwhelming feelings of guilt over her children. She feels she does not deserve happiness because she was not with them when society originally fell. She now presumes them dead and holds herself accountable for this. As we know, Rick has experienced guilt causing mental health issues, and despite Michonne's sudden disappearance having put lives at risk as they searched for her, he accepts her explanation.

Maggie faces twin crises: Carl has disappeared and Gregory has mounted a failed attempt on her life.

Double Dilemma

At the Hilltop, Maggie Greene and Paul Monroe face twin crises. Carl has disappeared and former community leader, Gregory, had mounted a failed attempt on Maggie's life. She's sure Carl has snuck away to rescue Lydia, a Whisperer girl, who he had formed a bond with and who was returned to them (admittedly, Alpha left Maggie with little choice).

However, Maggie chooses to prioritize Gregory as her immediate problem.

Thinking back on the fruitless search for Michonne, Maggie does not wish to risk more lives by sending out a rescue party for Carl, potentially fomenting further ill-feeling among her people. She decides Carl must fend for himself.

The Gregory dilemma is a more pressing problem. Jesus argues for his execution, but Maggie is concerned about how this will be perceived by her community when Negan (who has done far worse) remains imprisoned in Alexandria. Jesus argues that, unlike the Hilltop, Rick is not required to live alongside Negan's former people, the Saviors.

Life And Death

And what of Negan?

The former Savior leader remains defiant in Alexandria's jail, even during



the humiliation of a wash and a haircut from Olivia, supervised by a pistol-wielding Andrea. As they leave, Olivia has problems with the lock on the cell door, but finally it clicks. Alone once more, Negan is stunned when his cell door swings wide open. For the reader, this is one of many surprising moments in this volume that leave us on tenterhooks.

Will Negan escape and reignite his war against Rick or has too much time passed?

When Rick returns to Alexandria, the first thing he does is visit Negan. Unsurprisingly, he is shocked to find him relaxing in his cell with the door wide open. Two years' incarceration has done little to blunt Negan's bawdy language; indeed, judging by the colorful expressions he uses here, it may have even sharpened his wit. We think a



Negan is stunned when his cell door swings wide open... Will he escape and reignite his war against Rick?

rehabilitated Negan could have a career as a post-apocalyptic insult comic.

Negan's composure is in sharp contrast with Gregory's wheedling reaction to his crime. Negan has been in his cell for more than two years, and yet he is still temperamentally cool and menacing, even from behind iron bars. At the Hilltop, Gregory becomes a gibbering wreck when confronted by

IN A NUTSHELL

TITLE: 'Life And Death'

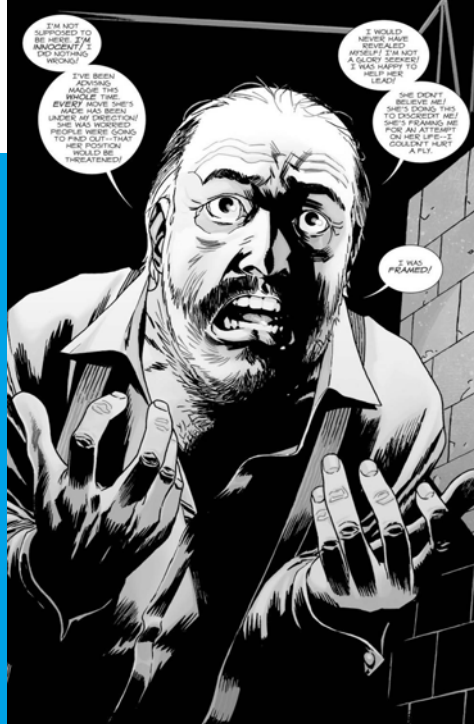
FEATURED ISSUES: #138 to 144

COLLECTION: Volume 24

SYNOPSIS: Absent from the comic book since the two-year time jump, Michonne finally returns in this volume. Her reunion with Rick is tense, while her reaction towards her former partner, Ezekiel, is even frostier. There are problems, too, facing Maggie at the Hilltop: Carl has run off, presumably chasing after Lydia, who was returned to the Whisperers, and Gregory made an attempt on her life to regain leadership. When Rick learns of Carl's disappearance, he sets off in hot pursuit. Rick eventually finds Carl and the Whisperers and finally meets their leader, Alpha. She tells him that the Whisperers are isolationists and want nothing to do with his people. She warns him that they must never cross into Whisperer territory again, or she will unleash a vast horde of walkers on his communities. Before letting Rick, Carl, and Lydia go, she takes one final parting shot, telling Rick that she has marked their border. Rick soon discovers the true horror of this statement when they return to find the severed undead heads of 11 of his friends mounted on stakes, including those of Ezekiel and Rosita.

TIDBITS:

- This volume features 11 human deaths (13 if you count two unnamed Whisperers), and three main character deaths: Ezekiel, Rosita, and Gregory.
- Michonne's missing storyline is revealed in Telltale Games' *The Walking Dead* video game spin-off three-parter, *Michonne*. It is considered canon to the comic book. Pete, who was introduced in the game, also features in this storyline.
- Dwight reveals that he wants to abdicate as leader of the Savivors. Rick responds by telling him he must hold an election to name a new leader, showing that some semblance of democracy has returned to the wilderness.
- In general, the Whisperers do not have names, although we know of at least two who are named, Lydia and Joshua, with Alpha and Beta being more designations than titles. Lydia tells Carl that the reason for the lack of names is that the Whisperers live like animals, and animals don't call each other by names (as far as we know).



Maggie and Jesus, pathetically pleading his innocence without acknowledging any guilt – he even claims he was framed.

Gregory isn't fooling anyone though, unlike Negan, who remains as manipulative as ever and able to target weakness and doubt with the accuracy of a cruise missile. As Rick departs, Negan tells him the real reason he has been kept alive: it's so Rick can convince himself that he is a good man. The old foe may have been knocked down, but he is still very much in the ring and working his opponent's bruises.

Wounded by Negan's words, Rick ends the day trying to justify his decision to keep Negan alive to Andrea. Rick lays

Negan tells Rick the real reason he has been kept alive is so Rick can convince himself that he is a good man.

it on the line in a speech that now seems well-rehearsed: "I'm the one who doesn't kill. I'm the one who says there's a better way." He ends by saying, "We're civilized people. If we ever lose that, if we ever go back to how it was... That's when it all starts to fall apart."

In a supremely ironic page-flip, we are confronted with the sight of Gregory hanging from a tree. Maggie also makes a speech, this time to the Hilltop's residents. She says that Gregory's death must be a new beginning for them all. They cannot kill each other, and from this point forward, the community should work together. The following series of panels shows the faces of the crowd: no one is cheering, not even her loyal supporter, Jesus. In stark contrast to Rick's Alexandria, Maggie's Hilltop seems very much a divided community.

Negan and Gregory's fates will have bearing on the story far beyond this volume. Negan's rejection of freedom here may be surprising, but we know that he has a plan lurking somewhere in that devious mind of his. The consequences of Gregory's execution are also left (if you will forgive the pun) hanging.



Even so, the Whisperer plotline is the real 'meat' of this volume, with 'Life And Death' the proper start of a march towards 'The Whisperer War.' Interestingly, the conflict with Negan and the Saviors was very clearly telegraphed way before 'All Out War;' the secretive nature of the Whisperers, meanwhile, has meant this growing conflict has been more of a slow creep, surprising both our protagonists and the comic's readers.

Search And Rescue

With final preparations underway for the fair, Maggie and others from Hilltop come to join the celebrations. Privately, Maggie updates Rick on the situation with Carl. As any father would, he sets about searching for his son, accompanied by Andrea and Michonne. The Hilltop's Dante also joins the party, as he is one of the few to have encountered the Whisperers first-hand and lived to tell the tale.

Meanwhile, Carl has been learning more about the brutality of Whisperer society. Alpha reveals the face behind the mask to him. Rather than an ogre, she is remarkably human. She explains how she hoped giving him insight into their lives would result in him understanding them better. Equally, she needs to understand the survivors better.

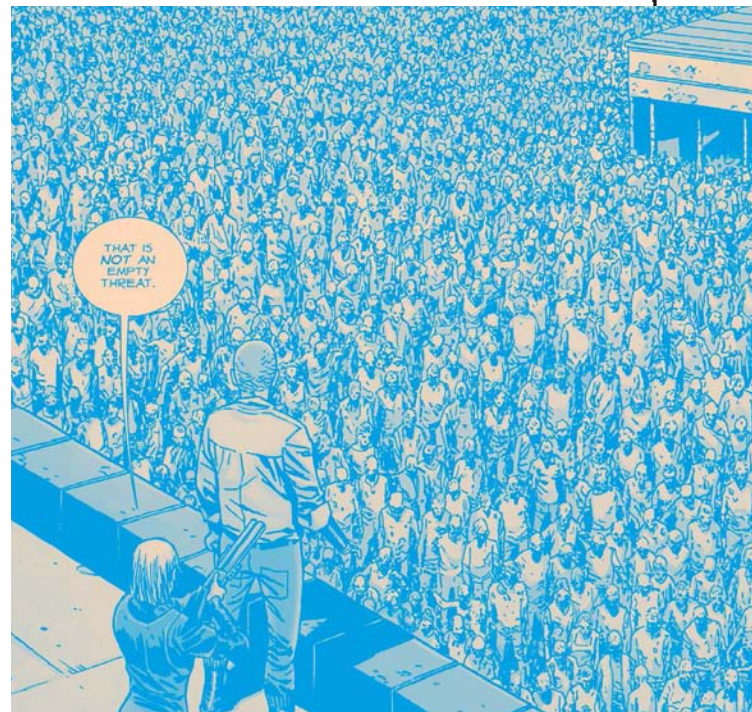
Time passes and we return to Alexandria with the fair underway. Hilltop's smith, Earl Sutton, is questioned by a female customer, who we quickly recognize as the unmasked Alpha, having easily infiltrated the settlement. She leaves when Earl becomes suspicious. As she flits through the crowds, we see



snatches of the survivors' lives: Ezekiel finds out Michonne still has feelings for him from the boat's captain, Pete, while Eugene and Rosita shop for maternity clothes.



Back in the wilderness, Rick's band is halted by a Whisperer, and he is taken alone to see Carl. Although happy to find each other again, the reunion doesn't go smoothly. Rick wants Carl to return with him, but Carl won't leave Lydia.



Rick has geared his defenses for a conflict with a similar enemy. [But] the Whisperers are a guerrilla army whose weapons are the dead.

WMDs

Alpha returns to the camp wielding an ominously bloody machete. Rick asks her what has happened. "I encountered some trouble on the road," is her dispassionate reply. Fearing for Andrea, Michonne, and Dante, Rick threatens her. She remains unmoved by his petulance, simply requesting he walk with her. In a scene that horribly echoes Glenn's death, Rick refuses to leave Carl before Alpha threatens to kill them. Unlike Negan, who presented Rick with no avenue of escape, Alpha at least gives Rick a choice: follow or die. Rick reluctantly agrees to accompany her.

From a rooftop, she reveals that the Whisperers possess a weapon of mass destruction, a corralled zombie herd. In an instant, the balance of power has shifted. With the Whisperers' ability to

walk among the undead and steer them as they see fit, Alpha effectively has a huge undead army at her beck and call. It is a masterstroke in post-apocalyptic diplomacy.

This encounter establishes strengths and weaknesses on both sides. As we will see in subsequent volumes, Rick has geared his defenses for a conflict with a similar enemy. Stockpiling weapons and ammunition in anticipation of a ground battle. The Whisperers do not share these tactics; they are a guerrilla army who use subterfuge and are not reliant on technology. Their weapon is the dead. We have seen groups use walkers defensively, but this is the first time we've seen them weaponized for offense. Once again, walkers are an enemy worth fearing.

Rick surely recognizes that the Whisperers pose a huge threat to his way of life. And yet, once again, Alpha presents Rick with a choice rather than an ultimatum: stay out of Whisperer territory or suffer the consequences. She tells Rick that she wants nothing to do with him or his people as her group has rejected humanity. They need never see each other again.

The Whisperers' drawback lies in their brutal life philosophy. Carl discloses to a horrified Rick that the women in the camp, including children, are regularly raped. The Whisperers' inhumane social order becomes a weakness when alternatives are presented, as Lydia discovered at the Hilltop through Carl's kindness. This is why Alpha is an isolationist who wants to avoid direct interaction with outsiders. Unfortunately, if she lets Rick, Carl and

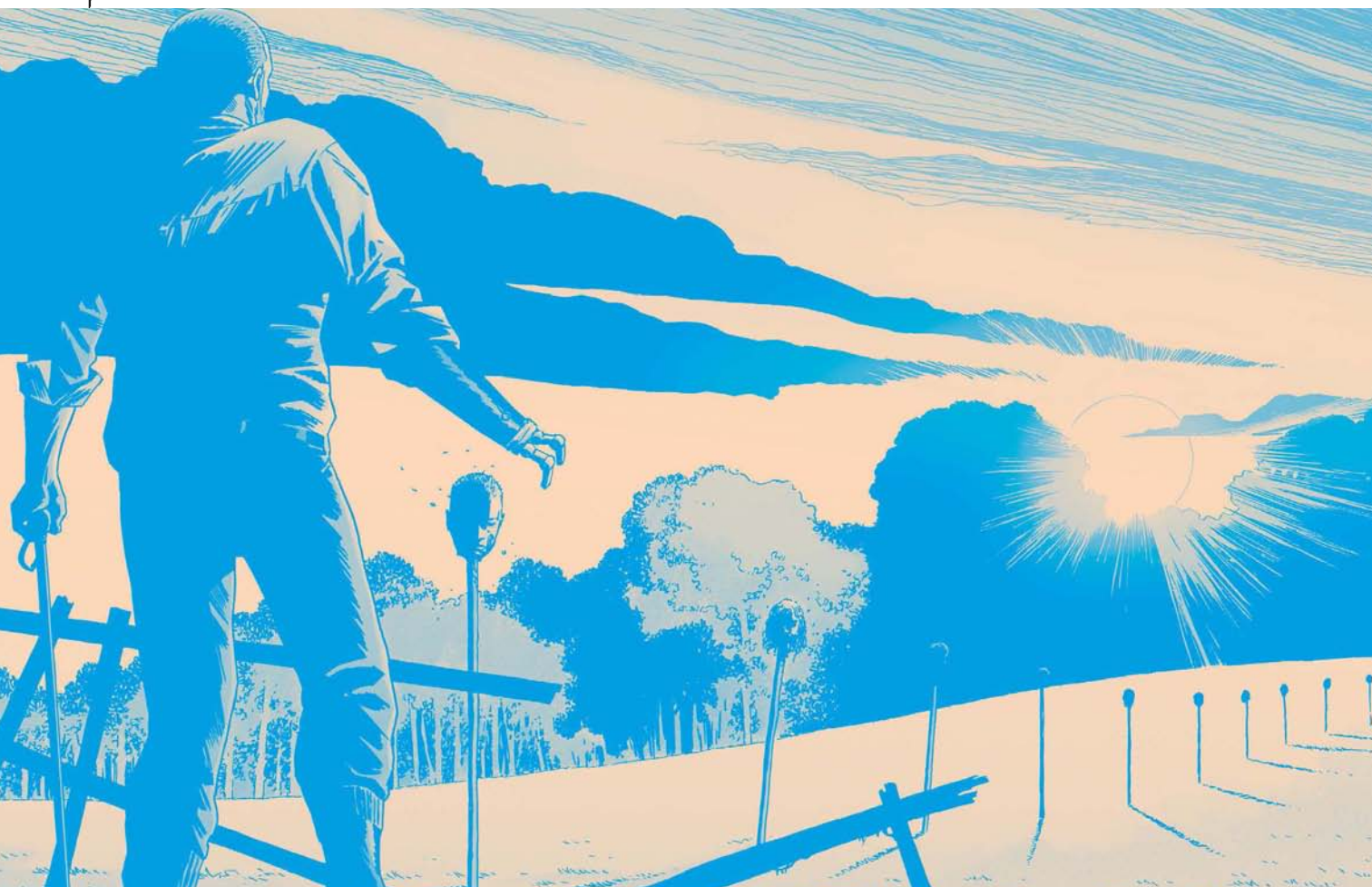
the others go, she will appear weak among her own people. Alpha quietly asks Rick to take Lydia with him. To the Whisperer group at large, Lydia will appear to have been cast out for her weaknesses. While this removes one problem (preventing the spread of an alternative ideology), Alpha clearly still has maternal feelings. Perhaps she is not so inhuman after all. This makes her soon-to-be-revealed actions all the more terrible...

Parting Shots

As Rick, Carl and Lydia leave, Alpha tells them that she has marked a border. If they ever cross into Whisperer territory again, she will unleash the horde.

Returning to Andrea, Michonne, and Dante, Rick comes upon a horrifying sight. Alpha was busy during her time in Alexandria, and true to her word, she has marked out a border between their territories. A line of stakes have been driven into the ground on which are mounted the severed and now undead heads of Olivia, Josh, Carson, Tammy, Erin, Ken, Amber, Larry, Oscar, Rosita, and Ezekiel.

Despite how large the communities of Hilltop, The Kingdom and Alexandria have grown, losing so many characters is a massive blow (emotionally, if not in numbers). As for the readers, the brutal and unseen deaths of longstanding characters Rosita and Ezekiel is a real shock. In a few pages, Robert Kirkman has once again blown Rick's world wide apart and put in place events that will lead to another major war. •

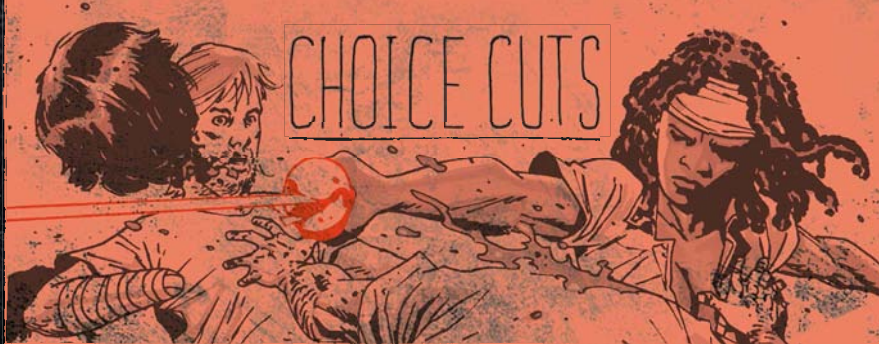




THE WALKING DEAD[®]

SEASON PREMIERE
SUNDAY OCTOBER 22 9/8c

amc[®]



The Alexandria Safe-Zone has been around almost half as many issues as the comic itself and outlasted many of its inhabitants (hard to believe, we know). Having survived numerous walker invasions and two wars, Alexandria has become the ultimate safe haven for those looking to survive the apocalypse (although not for everyone, as we shall see). *TWDM* takes a look at the place, its people, its ups and downs, and its choicest cuts from across its history.

WORDS: Russell Cook

ALEXANDRIA SAFE-ZONE



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Few things last very long in *The Walking Dead*. Whether it's a loved one, a pet, food supplies, or a home; one thing's for sure, at some point it will be gone. The Alexandria Safe-Zone, though? That's proved itself to be an extremely tough customer.

Located just outside of Washington DC, it's only a small place. But it's somewhere that has weathered many a storm and is still, to this date, battling on. Somehow, nearly four years since its inception, it's still a home to many a survivor.

Structurally, the Alexandria Safe-Zone is made up from the remains of a small town called – you've guessed it – Alexandria.

It's comprised of only a few blocks, surrounded by a wall, built by the town's original inhabitants. Many of those original Alexandrians are now a thing of the past. However, each of them, along with those that remain, have left their mark on the place, in some way, shape or form.

Today, Alexandria has grown far beyond its original bounds and is the home to a large number of the series' central characters, not least its main protagonist, Rick Grimes. In the not so distant past, it even held a fete for all the local survivor communities, providing a safe place for people to enjoy themselves, be merry, sell some wares, and try to forget the horrors that still lay outside.

"THE AREA IS RUN ON AN ISOLATED SOLAR POWER GRID. IT WAS PUT TOGETHER BY THE GOVERNMENT IN CASE SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED." OLIVIA



"WE HAVE STOCKPILES OF FOOD. WE HAVE SECURITY WALLS. WE HAVE ROOM FOR ALL OF YOU." AARON



THE ALEXANDRIANS

Now, we all know about the contribution of Rick, Michonne, and Andrea *et al*, so let's skip them for now. Instead, let's start at the beginning with Alexander Davidson. Alexandria would not have become a safe-zone if not for his vision and determination – the place even bears his name, after all. You do remember him, right? OK, so you may not know his face, as he never visually appeared in the comic, instead he was spoken about in hushed tones, but he was the founder of the place and was a former White House security liaison.

His biggest contribution to Alexandria was the building of the wall that protects the community. Sure, it's not all his doing, but it was Davidson who began the process of making the town into a fortress. But with good, often comes bad. His leadership saw him put others in danger, exploit women for sexual favors, and force many into roles they did not want or feel comfortable with.

The next key figure to mention is Douglas Monroe, a former congressman and democratic representative from the second district of Ohio. Picking up the reins from Davidson, he led the community with more compassion and, despite a penchant for women that eventually, in part, led to his own downfall, he was very well respected. Indeed, many considered him a very good leader during his tenure.

When he made the move from DC, Monroe brought along

his wife, Regina, and their son, Spencer. The latter proved to be a tricky customer. He went from being a loyal ally to Rick to attempting to switch sides and 'get in' with Negan, following the death of his father. Naturally, that didn't work out too well for Spencer. Negan may be many things, but he doesn't respect a backstabber. He shows his disdain for this move of treachery by emptying Spencer's guts all over the floor.

Eric and Aaron have also played a key role in the shaping of Alexandria. Between them, they scouted out groups for potential integration into the Alexandria community and, if not for them, Rick and the gang may never have made the town their home. Eric and Aaron prove themselves to be loyal and brave allies of Rick, standing by his side during the war with the Saviors, where, tragically, Eric met his demise.

After the time jump following 'All Out War,' several new faces have come into the fold. One that stands out as being particularly useful is Siddiq. In the past, he was an Oceanside resident, but has now become an integral part of the Alexandria family. Keep an eye on him!



flee their home, seeking refuge at The Kingdom and Hilltop. Nevertheless, after some time away, while the war was still raging, Rick and his people returned to fulfil their vow of rebuilding their home. And that's just what they did, making it bigger, stronger and better for everyone. They even have an orchard now...

At the time of writing, Alexandria was once again a pawn in the ongoing chess match that is *The Walking Dead*. The Whisperers are the latest threat, and Rick and the others are, not for the first time, being forced to defend their home. Alexandria remained

relatively unscathed in 'The Whisperer War' itself, certainly compared to the Hilltop. Instead, it served as a base for Rick, providing much needed ammunition for his troops. However, immediately following the war, a huge herd of thousands of walkers arrived outside its walls and began to tear them down, eventually overrunning the place.

Alexandria is symbolic in many ways, with its state representing our heroes' position, their wellbeing and their success. When Alexandria is doing well, then so too are its inhabitants.



"I LOOK AROUND AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE... AND I SEE CHILDREN PLAYING MAKE BELIEVE. YOU'VE BUILT A SHRINE TO A LONG DEAD WORLD." ALPHA

WORST MOMENTS

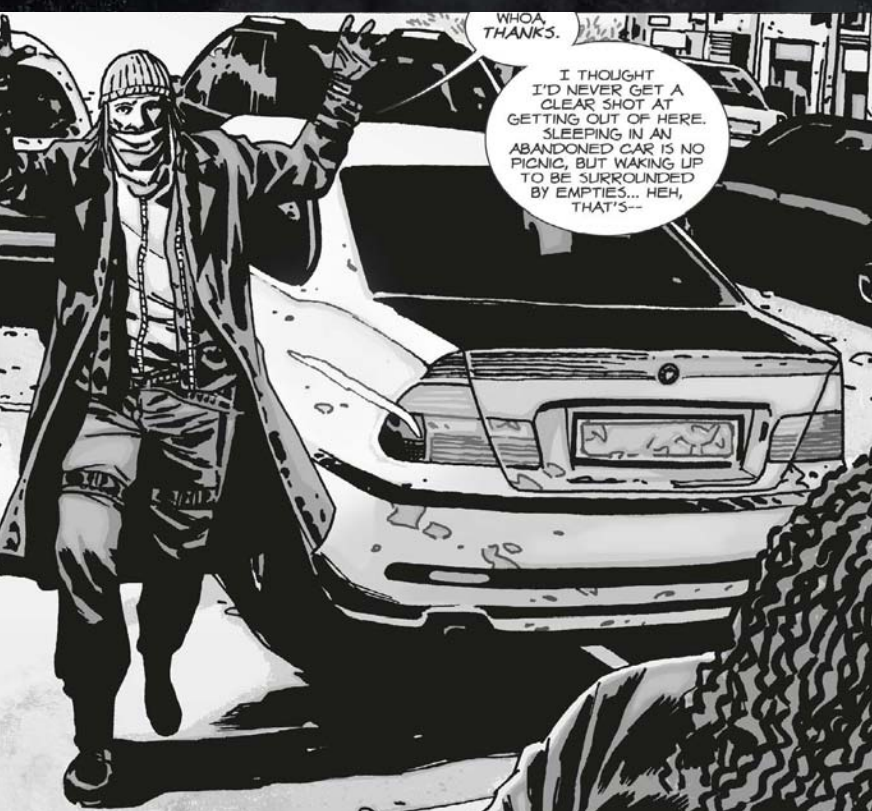
The Whisperers are responsible for the ultimate low-point experienced by Alexandria and its people. Negan had already been subdued, war seemed like a thing of the past, and life was beginning to feel somewhat normal. Then, as if from nowhere, the Whisperers come bounding in and burst the bubble. Cue the 'here-we-go-again...' moment.

Now, when you consider the herd invasion, the destruction brought about by



Negan and the Saviors, and the ongoing feuds that led to where Alexandria is today, the Whisperers' war is a real kick

in the teeth. The townsfolk were even enjoying a community fair when the swines first showed up.



BEST MOMENTS

For every low, there is a high. Well, not quite. But there are always positives in *The Walking Dead*, even if they are sometimes hard to find. Good things do happen... occasionally. Take Jesus's arrival at Alexandria, for example. He quickly became a new ally, whose introduction set about a chain of events that led to a more cohesive world for the survivors. You can chart the current state of the town back to his arrival on the scene.

And speaking of the town's positive state right now, here's another highlight for you: after the time jump, we're introduced to a thriving community with varying degrees of infrastructure. That's one of the best moments for Alexandria, and it's one that creates the foundation of the survivors' commitment to one another. They know they now have something special and they will do whatever it takes to keep it.



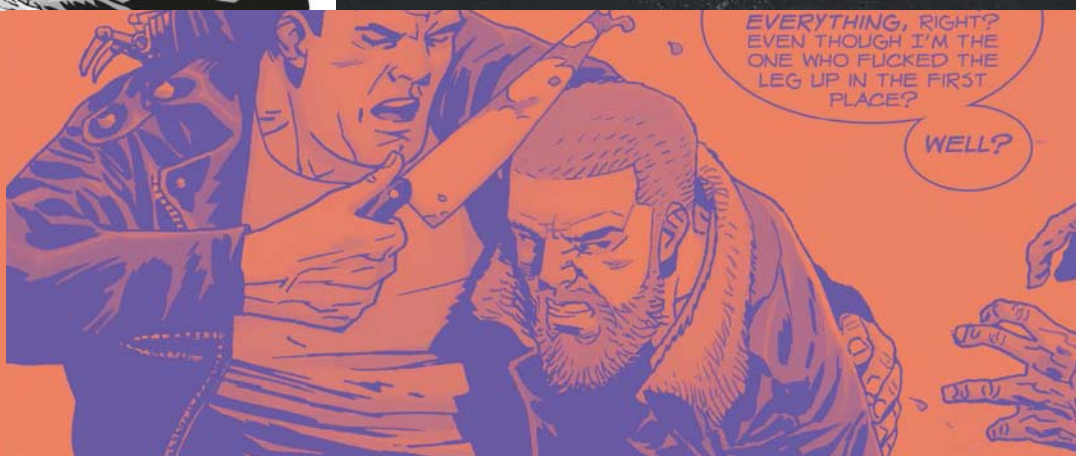
"THIS IS OUR HOME NOW. WE WILL CLEAN IT UP, REPAIR THE WALLS... AND CARRY ON. WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE." RICK GRIMES



"OF COURSE WE'RE GOING TO STAY. WE COULDN'T PASS THIS UP. THIS PLACE IS AMAZING." MAGNA

THE FUTURE

So where does that leave Alexandria and its people? Well, who knows? We'll have to see how things pan out with the Whisperers. But, with the current shape of the township, with old and new members bringing something unique to the fold (including Negan, would you believe), you can be sure they will be up for the fight. Put it this way, don't ever bet against them. •



amc FEAR THE WALKING DEAD SURVIVAL

MERCHANDISE FEATURE

PREVIEW

AMC'S FEAR THE WALKING DEAD SURVIVAL ATTRACTION

Company: Triotech

Location: Fremont Street Experience, Las Vegas, Nevada

Opening Hours: Sun-Thu: 1pm-1am; Fri-Sat: 1pm-2am

Price: \$30 per person (tbc)

Book now:

www.fearbeginshere.com

FEEL THE FEAR!

Experience AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead* like never before at an all-new attraction in Las Vegas...

Prepare to experience fear on a whole new level with the opening of a brand new attraction in the entertainment capital of the world, Las Vegas. Among the glittering lights and vibrant sounds of the city's historic Fremont Street Experience area, walkers have been let loose and are stalking the 9,000-square foot complex of AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead* Survival.

Created by Triotech, a Canadian company known for its innovative multi-sensory interactive attractions, *Fear The Walking Dead* Survival is an experience like no other *The Walking Dead*-themed attraction. An electrifying mix of thrill ride, escape room, maze, and interactive simulation ride, it offers high thrill moments for all fans of the hit AMC series. Thematically based on the TV show's first season – when Travis, Madison and the rest of the Manawa-Clark clan desperately sought a safe haven from the horrific early encounters of the zombie outbreak – the attraction has been designed to make

visitors “feel confusion, doubt, stress, fear, and excitement.”

That's what Triotech's VP for marketing, Christian Martin, wants anyway. “Ultimately, it's a fun attraction,” he clarifies with a chuckle. “It's not just for core fans or those who want gone. It's more of a thrill attraction. After all, we want people to want to do it over and over again and recommend it to their friends, and we want them to have a great experience.

“That was very important in terms of designing the attraction,” he continues. “We want people to feel emotions and engage on a psychological level, to mirror what's happened in the TV series. It respects the brand and the storyline of the show. It's not like a museum – we're putting you in a situation where you don't know what's going to happen next.”

Martin states that the attraction is open to anyone (including those of all fitness levels), but adds a caveat that it probably isn't for the very young or the easily scared, equating it to a PG-13 rating if it was a movie. Essentially, if you're old enough to watch and enjoy the show

then you're old enough to experience the attraction.

As for the content of the attraction itself, little can be said without potentially ruining it for you, so instead here are just a few non-spoiler tidbits: it starts off in a community college that has been taken over by the military; this 'safe zone' proves to be a little less secure than expected; all kinds of mayhem breaks loose; be prepared for walker encounters; various different zones will need to be overcome (beware the elevator!); survival (natch) is the final aim of the game. The whole experience should last almost 20 minutes, and with groups made up of no more than 12 people, everyone will get to enjoy the full immersive adventure.

“We've tried to be very true to the series,” Martin concludes. “We don't want people to think they are in an attraction or on a ride. We want it to feel real.”

Viva Las Vegas! •





BODY PARTS

THE WALKING DEAD PRODUCT PREVIEWS & REVIEWS...

REVIEW

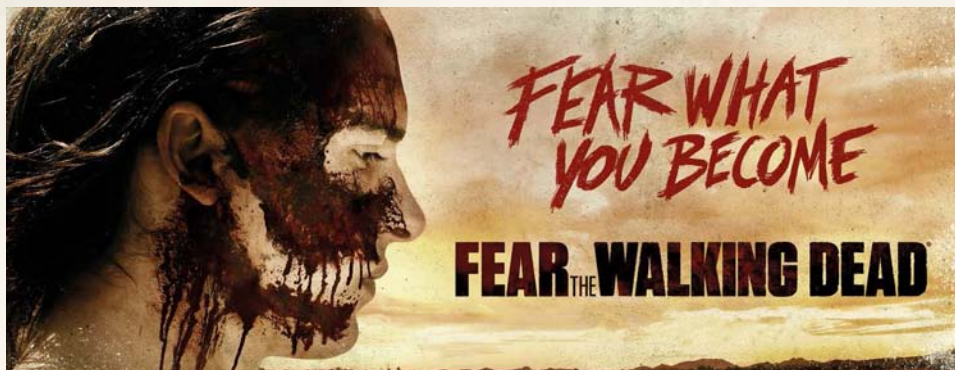
AMC's FEAR THE WALKING DEAD SEASON THREE, FIRST HALF

Channel: AMC (domestic), Fox International (worldwide)

Season three of AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead* kicked off with the double header 'Eye Of The Beholder' and 'The New Frontier.' After a brief stint at a military camp, introducing the eccentric character of Troy and his more level-headed brother, Jake – which led to some gruesome spoon-to-eye jamming moments – the Clark/Manawa family were finally reunited only to be split up into two groups almost immediately when a huge herd of walkers overran the base.

What followed next was perhaps the series' most mind-blowing moment to date: the first real major character death. The sudden demise of Travis (Cliff Curtis) was a real shock to the system, but it was a shock that *worked* in the context of the show's narrative. Despite upsetting some fans, it was perhaps the jolt the show needed and a bitter reminder that in this iteration of *The Walking Dead* no one is safe.

Without the restrictions of a comic book storyline to fence it in like its progenitor, *Fear The Walking Dead* can really play around with the concept, so that not even the strongest and most morally incorruptible characters (who can also take on at least a dozen walkers in a pit with his bare hands) are guaranteed survival. It was a moment that showed just how brutal this post-apocalyptic world really is,



a sobering fact that wasn't lost on step-daughter Alicia (Alycia Debnam-Carey), who witnessed the brutal nature of mortality first-hand when a wounded Travis tumbled out of the safety of their rescue chopper.

Alicia, Nick (Frank Dillane), and Madison (Kim Dickens) eventually all arrived at the safe-zone Broke Jaw Ranch and could properly enjoy their family reunion, *sans* Travis. Putting the grief of her husband's death on the backburner, Madison quickly devised a

plan to become the potential leader of this new community. Perhaps touched by empathy, top dog Jeremiah Otto (Dayton Callie) opened up to Madison, giving her a glimpse into his family's past. Armed with this information and guided by her own motherly instincts, Madison first set about conquering Otto's troubled son, Troy (Daniel Sharman) before making her real move to take control. The speech she delivered in 'Red Dirt' secured her status as trustworthy woman-with-

a-plan, and her antics in the mid-season finale, 'Children Of Wrath,' was a fine example of just how far she is willing to go to secure a safe place for herself and her children.

Personal relationships have been an evidential focal point throughout this season. Otto's other son, Jake (Sam Underwood), busied himself with his burgeoning relationship with Alicia, while Nick's relationship with Luciana (Danay Garcia) quickly diminished when she left him.



She may have been spooked by the idea of putting down roots, having witnessed that sweet old couple perish at the beginning of 'Burning In Water, Drowning In Fire,' one of the best and most defining moments of the season.

Although Nick had warmed to Otto, relating to the man's battle with addiction, much like his own, Nick was the one to finally shoot and kill him in what seemed like a gesture to convince his mother he was on her side. After Madison told the story of her own strained relationship with her father, Nick gained a newfound understanding of her, strengthening their bond.

Elsewhere, Strand came to the realization that not all relationships are beneficial, after his brush with Dante (Jason Manuel Olazabal) and the rediscovered bad-ass, Daniel (Ruben Blades), who also then abandoned him. Ever the lone wolf, Strand spent a brief stint on his capsized Abigail boat and seemed

to come to terms with the knowledge that he can only rely on himself and his will to survive, striding away from the Abigail and (literally) burning that bridge to his former life.

Coming to terms with the reality of this new world has been a prominent theme in the series. After his exciting reemergence in '100,' Daniel's desperate search for forgiveness showed the fragility of the once seemingly emotionally detached man. Watching him torture Efrain under Dante's orders was almost too painful to watch, but it made the downfall of Dante by Daniel's hand so much more satisfying. Although he couldn't change his past, he did take a risk in an attempt to alter his future. The idea that his daughter may still be alive was the respite that Daniel needed to give him hope.

Another moment we enjoyed this season was the Bible study group; this shining example of escapism for the teenagers

at Broke Jaw was a short-lived distraction, but a fun distraction nonetheless. Alicia found herself surrounded by people her own age, as they swapped stories and passed around alcohol and drugs, the last taste of what teenage life could have been had walkers not come along and shaken up her future. A future which Alicia lamented while talking to Jake.

As we've learned, the undead aren't the only walkers that we need to keep an eye on. Qaletaqa Walker (Michael Greyeyes) was a welcome antagonist for much of the first half of the season – not only was his fight just, especially compared to Otto's, but it was also quite brutal. Using

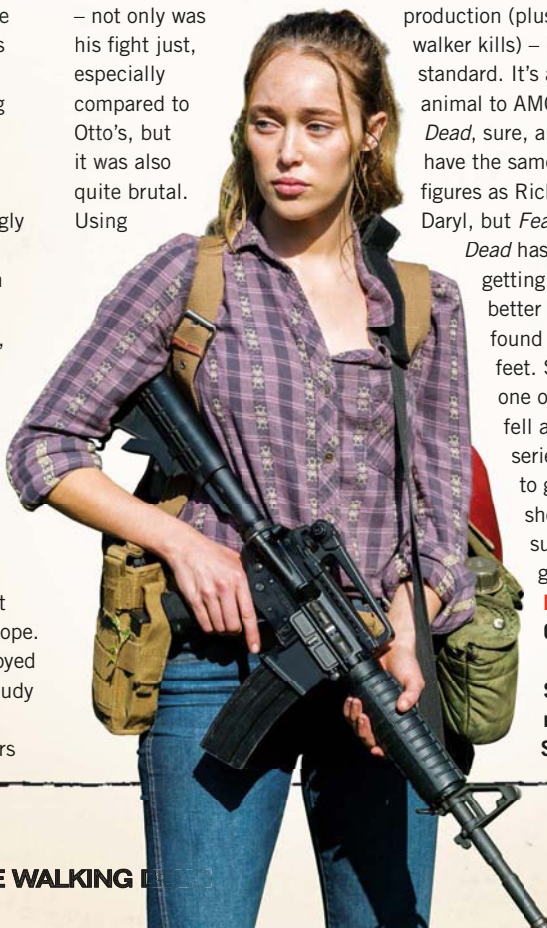
anthrax? Come on, that is some messed up tactics. Although seemingly satisfied with Madison's fearless resolution to the situation, Walker's presence brings with it the question – has the territorial war ended or is this just the beginning?

More than three million people tuned into AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead*'s season three premiere in the US. Not too shabby, but still a little disappointing given that 10 million who tuned into the series' pilot. It's a real shame, because the quality of the show – from performances by the actors to the detail in the production (plus some amazing walker kills) – is of the highest standard. It's a different animal to AMC's *The Walking Dead*, sure, and it doesn't have the same kind of heroic figures as Rick, Michonne or Daryl, but *Fear The Walking*

Dead has only been getting better and better as it's steadily found its dramatic feet. So, if you were one of those who fell away from the series, we urge you to give it another shot. You may be surprised by how good it is.

REVIEW: Kate O'Shaughnessy

Season Three returned to TV on September 10



PREVIEW

AMC'S *THE WALKING DEAD* BOARD GAMES & PUZZLE

Company: USAopoly

Released: Out now, only available in the US and Canada from USAopoly

Ages: All board games: 18+

Available: shopthewalkingdead.com

RRP: Monopoly: \$44.95; Trivial Pursuit: \$22.95;

Clue: \$44.95; Yahtzee: \$29.95; Puzzle: \$14.95

As longtime readers of this magazine will know, we're huge board game fans here at *TWDM* Towers. So, we're absolutely thrilled about the new crop of *The Walking Dead* games that have just hit stores, courtesy of USAopoly.

Following the success of Monopoly: *The Walking Dead* Survival Edition, which is based on Robert Kirkman's popular comic book, the board game and puzzle specialist has unveiled a TV series-themed version inspired by the AMC hit show. With custom fences and guard towers replacing the game's more traditional houses and hotels, and playing tokens that include Carl's hat, Negan's bat, and Daryl's crossbow, this looks like a heckuva lot of fun. The mechanics of the game remains pretty much the same as regular Monopoly – namely going around the board, buying properties and then charging other players fees for landing on them – but *The Walking Dead* 'skin' for all the components of the game are pretty cool.

USAopoly has also unleashed Trivial Pursuit: AMC's *The Walking Dead*, which sees the ever-popular general knowledge game getting an apocalyptic makeover. There are more than 600 questions from all seven seasons of the TV show to date. It's a bite-size version, so there's no board as such, with the question topics selected instead via the roll of a specially marked dice, which definitely makes the game more manageable (almost like a travel version). The object of the game remains the same – to be the first

to fill in all the six pieces of pie – so you not only need to be pretty good on your general knowledge, but also lucky with your die rolls. This is another one that we're really chomping at the bit to play.

Also out now are TV series-inspired versions of Yahtzee and Clue. The latter is one of our favorite games, so we can't wait to figure out who killed the Alexandria guards (your suspects are Rick, Michonne, Carol, Negan, Daryl, and Glenn), where they did it, and with what weapon. While still familiar as Clue, the board is particularly cool on this one, with the featured Alexandria locations being Deanna Monroe's Living Room, the Graveyard, the Guard Tower, the Main Gate, the Infirmary, Carol's Kitchen, the Church, the Armory, and the Pantry. The weapons of choice are the Revolver, a Knife, a

Crossbow, a Hatchet, a shotgun and Lucille. Yahtzee comes with custom playing pieces, including dice, game board pieces and character movers.

Completing this mouth-watering line-up is a fun puzzle. With 1,000 pieces, this premium product features a picture of Michonne, Rick, and Daryl and is entitled 'Fight The Dead. Fear The Living.' *TWDM*'s editor still has nightmares over the last time he tackled a

500-piece USAopoly puzzle, so we can't wait to see his face when we present him with this one, which is double the size.

USAopoly's range of *The Walking Dead* board games and puzzles, covering both the comic and now TV show, is exceptional. They are always finely put together, look lovely and play very well. More please! •

PREVIEW: Kate Lloyd





PREVIEW

SHIVA FORCE ACTION FIGURE SET

Company: McFarlane Toys

Ages: 12+

RRP: \$100

When it comes to San Diego Comic-Con (SDCC) exclusives and new product debuts, Skybound, the publisher of *The Walking Dead* comic (and many other ace titles), is always pretty generous with its wares. This year, there was a whole raft of new merch on sale, including a rather amazing *Saga* action figure double pack, four pretty awesome *The Walking Dead* faction pins (for Alexandria's Survivors, the Saviors, The Kingdom and Hilltop), and the rather swanky Ezekiel socks (aquamarine socks decorated with yellow stars, just like the King's shirt). But the exclusive that really caught our eye was Shiva Force.

'What in the heck is Shiva Force?' we hear you cry. Well, it's a collection of four figurines of characters from *The Walking Dead* comic (namely Rick, Michonne, Ezekiel, and Shiva), created by action figure expert



McFarlane Toys, all in one box. It might not sound so special on the surface, but one look at these epic figures and you will understand why we were so excited when we first saw them.

Brightly colored (predominantly in yellow), these five-inch figures are a fantastic throwback to the toys of the 1980s, when tie-in licensing became all the rage (you can

blame that one on George Lucas). There's more than a hint of classic 80s' *GI Joe* in there, and dare we say *Masters Of The Universe*, too – although we think Shiva (who is making her action figure debut) would kick Battle Cat's backside. It's worth noting that McFarlane Toys created a bonus fifth Shiva Force member, Jesus, which was only available for

subscribers of the summer MegaBox from Skybound.

The Shiva Force packaging has been given a vintage feel, with new artwork by artist Jason Edmiston (which also featured on six exclusive Shiva Force covers for the trade paperback 'All Out War,' also on sale at SDCC). And just to top it all off, Skybound created an amazing retro style 'TV' ad to promote the new set, replete with rocking electric guitar soundtrack (check out the link below).

All in all, Shiva Force took us right back to our childhood and we know if we got our hands on these hours of fun would follow, making up cool scenarios for our heroes to overcome. Will more figures be given the Shiva Force treatment in the future? We certainly hope so. Naturally, there's no guarantee that there will be any of these left to go up on sale after SDCC on Skybound's online store (only 1,000 of them were made), but there's always hope (and eBay). •

PREVIEW: Toby Weidmann

Check out the Shiva Force 'TV' ad: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y628JrviCTE

DEAD NOTES

WRITE TO US... EMAIL: walkingdeadmail@titanemail.com

TWITTER: @WalkingDeadMag FACEBOOK: Search 'WalkingDeadMag'

MAIL (US): The Walking Dead Magazine, 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL 60503, USA

MAIL (UK): The Walking Dead Magazine, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP, UK

FREE WALKING DEAD GOODIES! BEST LETTER WINS A PRIZE!

Welcome to our letters pages. Here's your opportunity to tell us exactly what you think about *The Walking Dead*. We want you to send us your thoughts on anything and everything *The Walking Dead*. Perhaps you have a question you'd like us to answer. Or you may want to send us your photos or fan art. We can't print every letter, but we'll try our best, and there's a cool prize up for grabs for our favorite. Send your *Walking Dead* correspondence to walkingdeadmail@titanemail.com, with 'Dead Notes' in the subject line.

Hello TWDM!

I just wanted to make some points about season seven and Negan. In my opinion, this was the best season yet. The way that the episodes focused on certain characters or communities built up their backstories and allowed us to realize that *The Walking Dead* world is much larger than our main group of survivors.

As for Negan, he must be the best character on the show. Jeffery Dean Morgan has really brought this larger-than-life character to the screen and driven home how dark the end of the world is. I may be in the minority saying this, but I'd much rather have Negan for a leader than Rick Grimes any day of the week.

This is my first time writing in to you guys and I just wanted to say what a great job you are doing.

Kody Comeau, Canada

Welcome to the TWDM family, Kody, and thank you for taking the time to write in to us. A strong series rests heavily upon its characters and their development, and season seven was a fine example of evolving the characters without ignoring the main storyline. We know some fans found season seven

to be a little slow (an accusation that's often made about season two, which had less episodes), but we enjoyed seeing the world expand beyond the core group. There was a lot of set-up, but we really think this will pay off in season eight.

As for Negan, well, he is deliberately a very divisive character and offers the audience a chance to see how surviving the apocalypse could manifest in a different way. He's certainly been a shot in the arm for the show. We love him too, but we're not sure we'd go quite as far as you in preferring his style of leadership over Rick's more inclusive approach – think of the poor schleps who have very little under Negan's rule. Negan's way undeniably brings results though.

*I'm a big fan of your magazine and *The Walking Dead*. Here's a picture I drew for you. I had a blast drawing it and I hope that it can be featured in your magazine.*

Derek Hughes, via email

Thank you very much for your kind words! We love hearing from fans and also love to



▲ Derek Hughes, via email

publish their talent, so here's a welcome place for your art in our 'Letters' page. Michonne looks bad-ass by the way!

If nothing else, episode 7.01 ('The Day Will Come When You Won't Be') confirmed what I've been saying for years: Lauren Cohan is one of the best onscreen criers on television.

Some of my favorite scenes have been when a teary-eyed Maggie Greene is fighting through moments of extreme desperation. For example, when she was sitting next to a freshly-amputated Hershel and telling him it was OK if he wanted to let go and die (season three's 'Sick'). Another great moment was when she was holding the newborn baby Judith, while Rick realizes that his wife has died during the delivery (season three's 'Killer Within').

It breaks my heart whenever her character goes through these emotionally trying times, often making me weep myself, but I appreciate the show more each time it happens. Am I a bad person for wanting to see her in more of these situations?

Donald, Pontiac, Illinois

No, we don't think so, Donald. This show provides some great moments for actors to show off their art, and Lauren Cohan's Maggie has had us in tears many times throughout the series' run. The new world has been very rough on the Greenes, in fairness. We actually found her reaction to Beth's death in season five's 'Coda' particularly traumatic to watch, and let's not mention Glenn's death in the season seven opener. For crying out loud, writers, give the girl a break!

But in the same breath, kudos to Cohan (and all the actors) for being able to put us through the emotional wringer so often. We especially love her ability to give Maggie such a dynamic range between heartbroken widow and bad-ass leader. More please!





I'm currently incarcerated in prison, and I have been an avid disciple and supporter of AMC's *The Walking Dead* since the show first started airing. Ever since, I have been addicted to the show. I would like to praise Robert Kirkman for creating *The Walking Dead* and giving avid fans like myself their fix.

As mentioned, I'm in prison and this is one show that everybody here watches and we talk about the next day. There is a huge fan base here, so you can probably guess I liked season three, where Rick and the gang made the prison their home. I couldn't help but root for Rick, which brings me to a question: what do you think would happen to all the prisoners if a real-life walker apocalypse took place? Would all the guards leave us in our cells? I would like to know your thoughts, so until then, keep making more episodes and magazines. We all need our fix.

Ramon Hernandez

Thanks for the letter, Ramon. We were surprised and pleased to hear you are able to read our humble magazine in prison. We hope both it and watching the show help make serving your time more manageable.

As for your question, wow, that's a biggie! We're not sure we're adequately knowledgeable to answer that question properly, but our best guess would be that there are protocols set in place for such a crisis. We do know some prisons have plans for how to handle, say, an earthquake. It seems

the primary priority would be for the safety of the prisoners and employees, with a secondary remit to prevent escape.

We did discover that if there was ever a nuclear strike, the government advises people to stay at home with the exception of the emergency services and military, who are to remain on duty. As prison guards are considered to be part of the emergency services, they should stay at their posts. But we really don't know what would happen during a real viral pandemic. Let's hope we never find out.

TWDM'S LETTER OF THE ISH!

What's up, everyone at TWDM? Your mag is my favorite out of everything I've read about

The Walking Dead, because it covers all of the graphic novels as well as featuring Charlie Adlard's edgy artwork. I don't have any of the issues of the comic, but I feel that TWDM has told me all I need to know about the storylines of each character and how they compare to the TV series.

I love to do sketches of some of the most memorable moments from the show. As such, I've sent you my sketches of Daryl and Beth, who I loved together so much.

I would like to know more about how to illustrate graphic novels. I was enthusiastic to read, in issue 16, Charlie's insights and inspirations of how he illustrates *The Walking Dead*. I would love to see

Charlie get his own page in TWDM, commenting on the fan art he's sent and giving tips on how to create your own comic. It would help me, and others like me, who want to become a comic book artist. I think more women should be comic book artists and creators. I'd like to contribute to that by learning more about how to create a story people would be interested in and make a successful comic from it.

I read that Robert will keep doing *The Walking Dead* for as long as he can, even though he already knows how it will end. I also read in TWDM#20 that the comic's editor, Sean Mackiewicz, said that Daryl Dixon will never appear in the graphic novel. That would be hard to do anyway, right? Still, Daryl could show up towards the end and then have his own spin-off comic book.

Thank you for always making each issue of TWDM full of artwork from Charlie and for printing all the phenomenal fan art. I especially appreciate all the artwork and letters you showcase from women.

Olanie G, Houston, Texas

What's up, Olanie? Glad you like the mag, and don't worry, we will always feature Charlie Adlard's amazing artwork inside our pages. We're huge admirers of his work – he's also a really nice guy if you ever have the chance to meet him.

You raised some good points in your letter, so let's tackle each in turn. First, in terms of comic art, the best advice we can give you is practice, practice, practice. And not just drawing people, but also architecture, flora/fauna and, very importantly, perspective to aid you in your visual storytelling process. We think your artwork is pretty amazing already, but there's always room for improvement.



We have heard Charlie tell wannabe comic artists, who have approached him at conventions to show him their portfolios, that their art is great but they need to demonstrate they can tell a story. As such, our advice would be to consume and read as much fiction as you can (including both written books and graphic novels) to help improve your understanding of narrative and character development.

There are also numerous books about illustration and storytelling that will help (The Art Of Charlie Adlard, for one). Check out your local library if you're working to a budget.

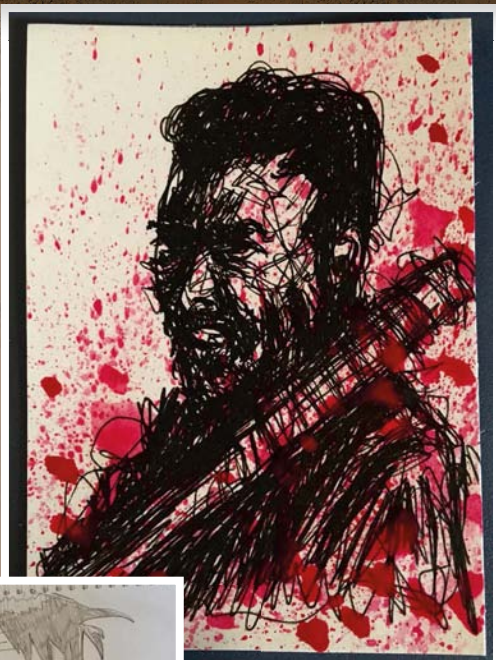
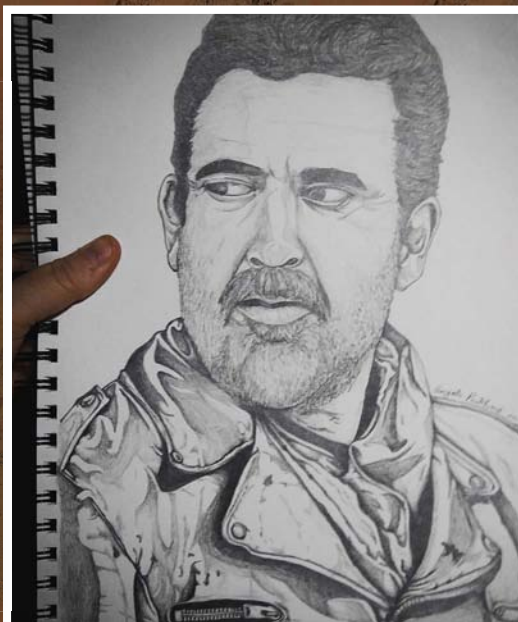
We actively applaud your goal to expand the recognition of women in comics. Be warned, it's a difficult industry to break into (whatever your gender), but we feel true talent will always shine through. Some of our favorite creators at the moment include Becky Cloonan (Demo, The Mire), Fiona Staples (Saga, North 40), Emma Rios (Pretty Deadly, Mirror) and Leslie Hung (Snotgirl). These are just a few, there are many more if you go looking.

And finally, you really should buy The Walking Dead comic! •

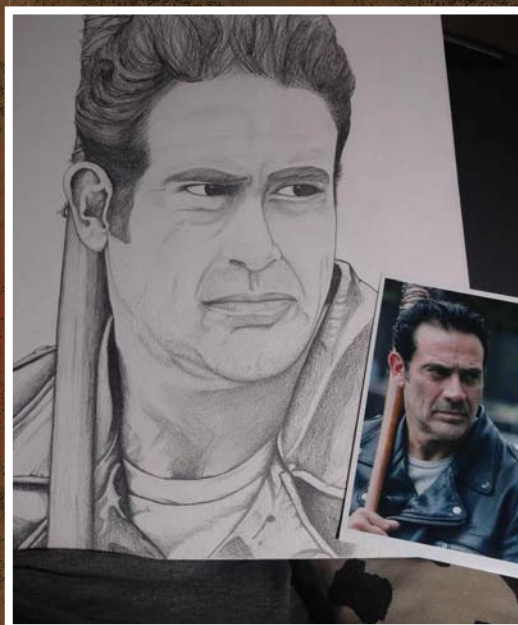
DRAWN OF THE DEAD



▶ Tracy Hawkins



▼ Tanya Whittle



▶ Angela Pritchard

◀ Rebekah Lowe

BY ROYAL DECREE

The king of the bobbleheads, Royal Bobbles, has a new family of amazing figurines ready to collect, all based on iconic characters from AMC's *The Walking Dead*...

PREVIEW

AMC'S *THE WALKING DEAD* LIMITED EDITION BOBBLEHEADS

Company: Royal Bobbles

Ages: 13+

Released: Out now

Available: bobbleheads.com,
www.amazon.com

RRP: \$29.95 each

There are three things that make a great collectible.

First, the quality has to be high, from the choice of material through to the artistry of the build. Second, fans need to feel like the creative company doesn't just know the subject matter well but that the collectible has been made with love and care. Finally, it needs to be something that fans want to collect. Thankfully, the new range of limited edition bobbleheads from Royal Bobbles succeeds on all three fronts.

These high-quality figurines have been crafted to the finest detail, with four iconic characters launching the series, namely Rick Grimes, Daryl Dixon, Carol Peletier, and current big bad, Negan, with Michonne and Glenn Rhee set to be the next two characters to join the range soon.

Besides the obvious, the first thing you will notice about these collectibles is just how meaty they are. They are bigger than you might expect, at approximately eight inches high, and they have a good heft to them. The heavyweight polyresin material is hardy and the spring connecting the head to the body feels dependably stable and taut, allowing for many energetic head-bobbing sessions.



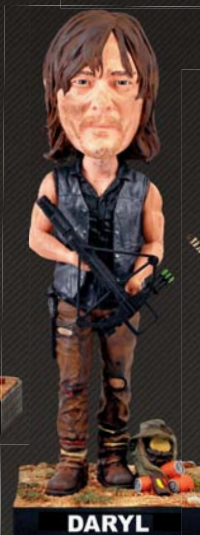
While the disproportionately large heads are always good for a chuckle, these figurines don't come across as novelty items or caricatures. It's clear Royal Bobbles doesn't just know *The Walking Dead* characters, it also loves them and you can see this in the wonderful detail of the builds. There are many elements in each one, both big and small, that will delight fans.

Carol's sweet innocent smile and plate of cookies hides the knife she's holding behind her back. And on the base, the eagle-eyed will spot a Cherokee rose. Daryl naturally comes armed with his signature crossbow, but there's that red neckerchief in his back pocket and cans of orange soda at his feet. Rick has his Colt and hatchet on his belt, but then there are those face scars he collected in 'Try.' And as for Negan, this guy's menacing grin still sends a shiver down the spine, even as a figurine. The detail on each is perfect.



"High quality and attention to detail are key," says Royal Bobbles' founder, Warren Royal. "Each piece has been highly researched and contains intricate details that true, longtime fans will recognize. We have studied each face, attire and weapon very closely, and fans will see hidden details that others won't notice."

Royal also sums up the bobbleheads' appeal. "They are a unique type of collectible, beyond the typical statue, toy or figurine. The motion and mobility of the heads and the realism in the designs make them feel extremely lifelike. They are



also a fantastic conversation piece, as they instantly attract the attention of anyone who sees them."

Quality, love, and originality — three great reasons to start collecting these limited edition bobbleheads today. •



BRAINS TEASERS



Here's another helping of the *TWDM* quiz for you to sink your teeth into. See if you can answer all of the below brainteasers in as fast a time as possible. Take it on yourself or challenge your friends and family. Remember though, this is just for fun – no prizes for getting them all correct, apart from the supreme knowledge that you know your stuff when it comes to *The Walking Dead*. Answers at the bottom of the page...

EASY

1. What two edible items did Dwight promise to bring to the rendezvous point with Sherry if they were ever separated?
2. Who links *Super Dinosaur*, *Outcast*, and *Invincible* to *The Walking Dead*?
3. Who kills Milton?
4. What's the title of *The Walking Dead* 'spin-off' comic that reveals Negan's backstory? Hint: it has been collected into a trade paperback, which will be released on October 4.
5. How many seasons of the show has the character of Tara appeared in, not including season eight?



MEDIUM



6. What name does Eugene christen the soft plush toy he takes for himself in the Sanctuary?
7. August 2017 saw the release of which issue number of *The Walking Dead* comic?
8. What was Tyreese's daughter called?

9. Who played Deanna Monroe (pictured left)?
10. Which character dramatically returned in season three's episode 'Teotwawki' of AMC's *Fear The Walking Dead*?

TRICKY

11. Who does Negan throw into the furnace in 'Hostiles And Calamities'?
12. Which voice actor from *The Walking Dead: A Telltale*



Games Series won a BAFTA for her work in the video game *Firewatch*?

13. Only four Whisperers have been named to date. What are their names?



14. In which episode of the TV show and in what issue of the comic book did Jesus first show up?
15. How many episodes of season seven did Greg Nicotero direct? Bonus points available for every episode title you can name.

BRAIN FREEZER

- ♦ What were the names of the five prisoners Rick and the group discovered in season three's 'Sick' (pictured below) and which ones survived the episode?

ANSWERS GIVEN BELOW:

ANSWERS:

1. Beer and pretzels 2. Robert Kirkman 3. The Governor (and then Andrea after he had been zombified) 4. 'Here's Negan!' 5. Four (seasons four through seven) 6. Grimly Gunk 7. Issue 170 8. Julie 9. Toviah Feldshuh 10. Daniel Salazar (played by Ruben Blades) 11. Doctor Emmett Carson 12. Cissy Jones 13. Alpha, Beta, Lydia and Joshua 14. Season six's 'The Next World' and issue 91 15. Five ('The Day Will Come When You Won't Be', 'The Well', 'Rock In The Road', 'Say Yes', and 'The First Day Of The Rest Of Your Life') **BRAIN FREEZER:** Big Tony, Tomas, Andrew, Axel, and Oscar – the latter two survived.

THE FORCE IS STRONG WITH THIS ONE

WE HAVE SOME EXCLUSIVE COMIC-CON LOOT UP FOR GRABS THIS ISSUE, INCLUDING THE MAGNIFICENT SHIVA FORCE...

The advent of the internet has meant missing out on experiencing San Diego Comic-Con (SDCC) first hand is not as big a deal as it used to be, with fans able to watch the new trailers and panels online in the comfort of their own home. One thing YouTube can't replace, however, is the opportunity to buy some exclusive merch on sale only at the Con.

But don't worry, *TWDM* has your back. We're offering one lucky winner a whole host of ace Skybound exclusive *The Walking Dead* goodies from SDCC, including two sets of the amazing Shiva Force action figures (one full color,

one all bloodied); the six special 'All Out War' comic variants, featuring the exclusive Shiva Force artwork; a six-inch Lucille ballpoint pen; a bloodied version of the Lucille replica bat; and two Skybound blind box minis (we don't know what three-inch figures you will find in these, but they will be characters from *The Walking Dead*, *Horizon*, *Manifest Destiny*, *Invincible* or *Outcast*). All in all, this sweet prize is worth more than \$200. Nice!

To enter, answer the question below correctly and keep your fingers crossed!

WIN!

GIVEAWAY



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN THIS AMAZING PRIZE, JUST ANSWER THE QUESTION BELOW:

WHICH MAJOR CHARACTER WAS KILLED BY NEGAN IN ISSUE #100 OF THE WALKING DEAD COMIC?
A. RICK B. GLENN C. ANDREA

ENTER BY EMAIL AT
www.titanmagazines.com/walkingdead, or send your name, address, email, age and answer to 'The Force Is Strong' Giveaway, *The Walking Dead Magazine* #21, 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora IL 60503 (US).

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. A PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE CHANCES OF WINNING. MANY WILL ENTER, FEW WILL WIN. The sweepstakes is open only to legal residents of the UK and US (except in the state of Florida and Puerto Rico and where otherwise prohibited by law or regulation) who are at least 13 years of age, or with parental or guardian consent. Void where prohibited. Entries must be received by midnight (PST) on 11/13/17. Winners will be selected by a random drawing on or around 11/13/17 from all eligible entries received, odds of winning dependent on number of eligible entries received. Titan Publishing Group is the recognized promoter of these sweepstakes. No employee of Titan Publishing Group, AMC, Skybound, or participating companies, are allowed to enter these sweepstakes. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Full T&Cs available at: www.titanmagazines.com/thewalkingdead

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DEATH SENTENCE

Remember that character who was doomed as soon as they stepped into frame? No? Us neither, so our 'Death Sentence' feature is here to remind us. **WORDS:** Dan Auty

THE CONDEMNED

Jim only sticks around for a few panels, but unlike many of the doomed single-issue victims of *The Walking Dead*, he does at least get a name, mentioned later that issue by one of his colleagues. Jim is a Woodbury resident who is helping patrol the woods beyond the town shortly after the Governor's ill-fated first attempt to storm the prison.

WHEN YOU GOTTA GO...

Poor ol' Jim doesn't get the most glamorous of introductions. We first see his feet, with a stream of urine hitting the ground as he relieves himself on patrol. Should have gone before you left, dude, you might still be alive!

SURPRISE!

Unfortunately for Jimbo, this impromptu toilet-stop is timed for the exact moment



when Michonne and Tyreese emerge from the bushes as part of a retaliatory strike on the Governor. Despite the fact that

the rest of his Woodbury patrol are nearby, Jim is a sitting duck for a bit of katana reckoning and Michonne is in no mood to let him finish up.

First And Last Words

Jim might get a name, but he doesn't have much in the way of dialogue. He says one line, which

he delivers in true poetic elegance. 'Whu...?!' he exclaims, shortly before Michonne swings her sword at him.

CHOP TOP

Our unfortunate victim is at least given a memorable death. Michonne's blade slices right through his head, separating top from bottom in spectacular style. Seeing villains dispatched gruesomely is one of the great pleasures of *The Walking Dead*, and Jim's demise is right up there. Fare thee well, sir! •



THE SECRET DIARY OF A WALKER

It's not easy being a zombie in *The Walking Dead* world, as our week in the life/death of an undead walker reveals. Diary entries transcribed by Stuart Barr.



MONDAY

It was late and I was finishing off a man's left leg when I came to ponder the events that led to this moment. "Visit Georgia," they said, "Walk the Presidential Pathways, visit Warm Springs, eat our lovely food." I'd barely arrived in Columbus and seen the Lunch Box Museum when it all went to hell. Got set upon in a fried chicken joint and woke up rotten.

TUESDAY

This holiday sucks, y'all! Never could afford fancy five-star hotels, but now that they

have plenty of vacancies the cable is off and the hot tubs are dry. At least the buffet is open all day long, but lately it's gotten harder to find good eating and nothing is deep fried the way I like it. It's all raw. Do I look like I'm from San Francisco?

WEDNESDAY

Raw or not, a man's gotta eat, so I hit the road. Tried to use the rental car but since the 'change' I've lost the ability to program a sat nav. Would've asked the wife to map read, but I ate her a while back. And I can't find my map...

THURSDAY

Think my flannel shirt is getting a bit ripe. Seen a few



of the fresher ones steering themselves around me. What a bunch of blowhards — thinking their own flesh don't stink. I can smell your dumbasses, you know!

Tired. Gonna find me an abandoned car for a quick nap.

FRIDAY

What's that? Sounds like a car engine. Ooh, there's a kid in there, always was partial to some tender calf meat...

"GRRRAAGGH! HUURGGH!" SHUK! •



JUDGE, JURY & EXECUTIONER

KATELYN NACON

A character unique to AMC's *The Walking Dead* iteration, young Enid was first introduced in the fifth season's 'Remember.' A troubled teen when we first her, who perhaps unsurprisingly connected with Carl Grimes (Chandler Riggs), Enid has done more than 'Just Survive Somehow' (JSS). Particularly in season seven, she has proven to be a valuable member of Rick's team, providing emotional support for Maggie (Lauren Cohan) after the murder of Glenn (Steven Yeun).

Enid is brought to life by the super-talented Katelyn Nacon, who some will have recognized from Cartoon Network's Adult Swim infomercials, *Too Many Cooks*. She's certainly an actor on the up, having garnered two nominations for her portrayal of Enid at the Young Artist Awards (respectively in 2016 and 2017). She's none too shabby at singing either, releasing an EP, *Love In May*, back when she was just 16 years old. But what's the object she always carries with her and what would she call her teddy bear? *TWDM* asks the important questions.

INTERVIEW: Toby Weidmann

What's your idea of perfect happiness?

I really do what I love and want to keep acting. When I finally look back on my life, I want to be happy with the decisions I've made. So, to do good in my life.

What's your biggest phobia?

Being in a very awkward social situation.



Is the glass half empty or half full?

Half full. Although there are a few days when it's definitely half empty. (Laughs)

If not an actor, what would you be?

A singer.

What's been your fondest memory of working on *The Walking Dead*?

The people. It's such a big loving family.

What's the best name for a teddy bear?

Mister Cuddles.

What items do you always carry on you?

My phone. Unless I lose it or forget it, which seems to happen quite a bit.

What's the first item on your shopping list?

Potato chips.

And what's your luxury item?

Luxury potato chips. I really like potato chips. (Laughs)

Who has been the biggest influence on your life?

I'd say my close family. My parents and my brother.

What's your personal motto?

"I'm tired." I'm always sleepy. I feel that has to be my personal motto because I say it all the time. (Laughs)

Just so we know, what did you do last summer?

I worked and I slept.

How long is a piece of string?

How long is a piece of string? As long as your heart desires.

How far is too far?

Walking for two miles.

Pirates or ninjas?

Ninjas. Silent but deadly.

A time machine or a space ship?

Sewing machine... Ohhh, time machine or space ship? (Laughs) I just like making clothes. Time machine then.

***Midsummer's Night's Dream* or *Hamlet*?**

Hamlet.

Robert Kirkman — genius or madman?

Madman.

And finally, have you lied at all during this interview?

No. I've been honest. And I feel like I lie all the time; that's my job, to lie. (Laughs) •

NEXT ISSUE

GOING HEAD TO HEAD

ONE **VS** ONE BATTLES IN *THE WALKING DEAD*

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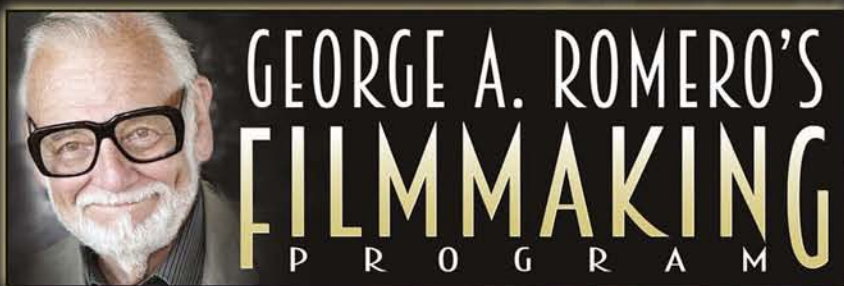
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